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Political Leadership in Yugoslavia: Evolution of the League of Communists

A. Ross Johnson

November 1983

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Dear Mr. Bancroft:

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive ink, appearing to read "Margaret P. Grafeld".

Margaret P. Grafeld
Director
Office of IRM Programs and Services

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R-3049/1

Political Leadership in Yugoslavia: Evolution of the League of Communists (U)

A. Ross Johnson

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PREFACE

(U) This report examines the dynamics of political leadership and the prospects for leadership stability in post-Tito Yugoslavia. It appraises the importance of the republican vs. the federal political base of the Yugoslav leadership. It is focused on the evolution of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) since the late 1960s and especially on the issue of the importance and role of the LCY's constituent republican and provincial organizations. It attempts to illuminate the sources and mechanisms of political leadership and decisionmaking in Yugoslavia and thus to contribute to U.S. government assessments of Yugoslavia's likely future development and stability.

(U) This report is addressed to officers and analysts in the co-sponsoring agencies and other U.S. government officials. It reviews developments in the LCY through March 1983 and thus incorporates the experience of 35 months "after Tito"--a period sufficiently long to permit assessing the functioning of the political system in the absence of its architect and former supreme arbiter.

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This report is primarily concerned with the issue of how political leaders emerge in Yugoslavia and deals principally with the LCY. It does not attempt to provide a general assessment of Yugoslavia's political or economic prospects, or of Yugoslavia's international position. The report traces the devolution of power within the LCY over the past 20 years and suggests how leadership authority is established on a decentralized basis and how decisionmaking requires interregional consensus. Leadership changes and related political controversies are traced for some of the LCY's constituent republican and provincial organizations--in Croatia, Serbia, Vojvodina, and Kosovo. Limitations on fieldwork and difficulties in obtaining regional primary materials precluded more detailed examination of policymaking at the republican/provincial and lower levels. The central thesis of this study highlights the importance of additional attention to the republican and provincial Party organizations and more systematic analysis of the careers of their leaders.

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Yugoslav political system evolved from centralism in the initial post-World War II period to federalism in the 1960s and quasi-confederalism in the 1970s. As the Party introduced a less doctrinaire and more participatory political system after 1950, Yugoslavia's multinational composition exerted a major influence on the Yugoslav polity. Communist leaders of the constituent regions of Yugoslavia (the six republics and two provinces) pursued regional economic, cultural-national, and then directly political interests, and this undermined the supranational Yugoslavism that Tito and the Yugoslav Communists attempted to forge during and after the Partisan War. The Yugoslav state was reconstituted on a quasi-confederal basis by the 1974 Constitution. Federal posts were staffed on the basis of republican/provincial parity. All-Yugoslav policy decisions required consensus among the regions.

The Yugoslav Communist Party (known as the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) since 1952) has also been decentralized. The Ninth Party Congress of 1969 recognized the powers of the constituent republican and provincial LC organizations. The LCY Presidency (or Presidium), Central Committee, and other bodies were reconstituted on the basis of parity representation of the republican/provincial LC organizations. Earlier, the Party Secretariat had been abolished. In the early 1970s, following an upsurge of nationalism in Croatia and elsewhere, Tito attempted to reconstruct an autonomous federal Party center. He failed, because revolutionary supranational Yugoslavism had dissipated, and because newly appointed regional Party leaders promoted regional interests even more vigorously than had their purged predecessors. By the late 1970s, Tito abandoned the attempt to counterpose a more centralized LCY organizational basis to the quasi-confederal organizational principles of the Yugoslav state. Instead, he sought to institutionalize and depersonalize the system of collective leadership and decisionmaking based on interregional consensus. The relatively smooth functioning of this system since Tito's death is

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testimony to both the success of that effort and Tito's diminished personal role in the political system in his final years.

The LCY continues to affirm that it is a unified political organization, with one Congress, Central Committee, Presidency, and other bodies, and that it functions on the basis of "democratic centralism." Both history and the self-interest of subfederal LCY leaders argue against any formal change in this principle. Proposals advanced by LCY theorists since Tito's death to formally modify "democratic centralism" or otherwise formally proclaim a change in the principles of LCY organization in the direction of greater explicit "Party federalization" have not found official support at any level. But in practice, the LCY has evolved from a centralized to a federal organizational basis. The Party "center" has become a "federal center." The federal LCY disposes of almost none of the apparatus of a traditional Communist Party, although it lacks a Secretariat, a cadre of central officials, and centralized information channels. The federal LCY functions on the basis of interrepublican consensus on both policies and personnel. In recent years, the federal LCY has intervened in the affairs of only one of its constituent suborganizations, Kosovo, in 1981; and that case involved not "central" intervention but the united stand of other regional officials under crisis conditions.

The decentralization or "republicanization" of the LCY appears irreversible. The process of decentralization developed "from below" (unlike the introduction of "self-management" in Yugoslavia, which was decreed from above). It was only partially and temporarily reversed by Tito's efforts at recentralization in the early 1970s. Today there is no significant support within the LCY for recentralization. It is instructive to compare the criticisms of excessive decentralization of the LCY that are being advanced today with similar criticism at the turn of the 1970s. Then, nearly all reformist Party intellectuals who had not succumbed to the nationalist bacillus called for reconstruction of an LCY "political center" entailing recentralization, albeit voluntary and mutually accepted.¹ Such views suggested that there was some

¹ See, e.g., the series of articles in *Gledista* and *Praxis* in 1971, especially articles by Vojin Rus and Branko Horvat in *Gledista*, No. 5/6, 1971.

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support within the Yugoslav elite for Tito's efforts at partial recentralization at that time. Today, such voices are almost totally absent,² and when they do appear, they are labeled "unitarist," i.e., centralist. Since Tito's death, the only significant calls for recentralization of the LCY have come from Serb theorists or junior officials who are either known for or immediately suspected of being motivated by Serbian nationalism.³

The republican and provincial LC organizations are not "Stalinist" in either their role in the political system or their internal organization. Most specific decisions on republican-level policy issues are reached outside of LC forums, with the communal (*opstina*) assemblies and social councils (*drustveni odbori*) playing key roles in this respect. Yet the republican LC organizations remain the ultimate arbiters on republican-level issues, and in general they play a more active role vis-a-vis the republican governmental and public machinery than does the LCY vis-a-vis federal organs.

Decentralization of the LCY has had common effects on all the republican and provincial Party organizations. The postwar Communist generation has gradually supplanted the Partisan generation in the leadership of all subfederal Party organizations. Leadership rotation was introduced in the early 1970s; this appeared to be "musical chairs" among a stable group of professional politicians. Continuity in the occupancy of regional Party leadership posts existed only for the president, and the principle of rotation was extended to include the top republican Party posts as well in 1982.⁴ Judging by analysis of career

² A notable exception is Fuad Muhic, the Bosnian Muslim theoretician who has consistently advocated a non-federalized Party as the backbone of a federalized state (see Muhic, 1981). Yet Muhic declared in late 1982 that there had been insufficient criticism of "unitarism" (i.e., centralist tendencies) prior to the Twelfth Party Congress (Muhic, 1982).

³ Today, just as in interwar Yugoslavia, Great Serbianism is the only possible national basis for centralism, since Serbs are the largest national group, numbering 36 percent of the total population, and the only group with co-nationals in most regions of the country.

⁴ Republican Party presidents were chosen for one-year terms in the spring of 1982. In the spring of 1983, some but not all were reelected for a second year, as LCY officials began to reinterpret Tito's legacy of leadership rotation, arguing it was fully valid at the federal level

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profiles in the Croatian, Serbian, and Vojvodina Party organizations, the republican/provincial Party leaderships acquired a more regional and less federal character during the 1970s (suggesting a tendency in career patterns, just as in economic activity, of greater regionalization). The individual republican/provincial political elites have presented varying profiles. The Serbian and Croatian elites have evidently experienced more internal dissension than their counterparts in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Vojvodina, and (until 1981) Kosovo. In the last year, more cohesive, moderate, and less nationalist (in the case of Serbia) leaderships have emerged in Croatia and Serbia.

Decentralization of the LCY has raised issues for the LC Serbia not faced by the other subfederal organizations. In the 1970s, as Kosovo and Vojvodina (constituent provinces of Serbia) gained republic-like powers, an effort was made to reconcile their status with the integrity of Serbia as a republic through a divergence between practice and theory analogous to (but perhaps more transparent than) that which existed in the federal LCY. The compromise solutions struck in the mid-1970s came unstuck shortly thereafter, and were subsequently made even more unworkable by the crisis in Kosovo and the Serbian nationalist backlash that it fanned. The slogan of the Albanian nationalists, "Kosovo a Republic," is official heresy in the provinces just as in the Serbian republic; yet the provincial LC organizations--Vojvodina even more energetically than Kosovo--continue to demand and largely enjoy republican-like powers. The result has been considerable de facto asymmetrical federalization of the LC Serbia, for the provincial LC organizations have won a voice in all-Serbia affairs that gives them influence over developments in Serbia proper (i.e., the area outside the provinces), whereas Serbia proper has no corresponding say in the provinces. The issue of how to deal with the provinces has induced a higher level of differences among and tension within the LC Serbia leadership than in the other republican Party leaderships.

but had been carried to the extreme at lower levels, e.g., "Experience in the federal organs in a multinational community is one thing, while experience in municipalities and in executive organs is another." (Ribicic interview, Tanjug, December 5, 1982, Foreign Broadcast Information service, FBIS-EEU, December 8, 1982.)

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Regional and organizational affinities in the LCY have proven stronger than purely national ties. It is the Serbian-dominated LC Vojvodina leadership that has defended provincial prerogatives vis-a-vis the LC Serbia, while the LC Bosnia and Hercegovina, in whose leadership Serbs constitute the largest national group, has strongly defended the prerogatives of the republican LC organizations and warned against "Great Serbian" pretensions. Serbs in the LC Croatia leadership have generally opposed hegemonic tendencies in the LC Serbia. Outside Serbia proper, only the Serbian minority in the Kosovo Party leadership (still dominated by Albanians) has proven to be an ally of the Serbian Party. Hence, it is an oversimplification to equate the divergent interests of the republican and provincial Communist Parties with nationalism. Tabulations of Yugoslav leaders by nationality alone are misleading and should be avoided.

Heightened economic problems since the Twelfth LCY Congress of mid-1982 have challenged the LCY to achieve greater unity and discipline, so that Yugoslavia can carry out the tough economic stabilization measures that are required and limit the economic fragmentation of the country. Whether and how such leadership cohesion can be obtained remains an open question. There have been no changes in personnel policy or institutional organization and no internal Party discussions that would point to any significant possibility of an administrative recentralization of the LCY. Hence, effective decisionmaking presupposes continuation and refinement of the process of interregional consensus-building within the LCY, rather than any alternative. The LCY, like the country itself, cannot be recentralized.⁵

⁵ That judgment should not prejudice appraisal of the outcome of LCY policies (or of the cohesion of Yugoslavia generally). Some recent developments, including the results of the 1980 Yugoslav census and public opinion polls, may well signify an increase in dual consciousness in Yugoslavia, involving national identification with a particular nation or nationality but civic identification with Yugoslavia as a state. (Matvejevic, 1982, argues this thesis.) And hypothetical recentralization imposed by a minority (i.e., by the Serbs), if it could somehow be achieved, could easily worsen rather than improve the prospects for stability.

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The focus of appraisals of the Yugoslav leadership should be shifted from the federal to the republican/provincial level. Present and likely future LCY leaders are (to rephrase Tito) "men from the republics who *are* republicans," meaning that they must retain a strong political base and constituency in a republican LC organization. If the LCY is to remain a viable and effective political force in Yugoslavia, federal leaders must presumably view Yugoslavia's interests in somewhat broader terms than was the case when they occupied republican-level posts and must act accordingly, retaining some of that all-Yugoslav perspective when they again move to republican-level jobs. But rotation of personnel between the republics/provinces and the federation is to be expected. A "federal" LCY official or any other "Yugoslav" leader who remains too long in a federal post or otherwise loses support in his parent republican LC organization is unlikely to have a political future, either in the federation or in the republic. A new group of more "centralist" Yugoslav leaders is unlikely to emerge. The first question to ask about a present or prospective "Yugoslav" leader is not whether he has advanced "beyond" the republican level but whether he remains a leading member of the republican political elite.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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GLOSSARY

| | |
|-------|--|
| AVNOJ | Anti-Fascist Council of the Popular Liberation of Yugoslavia |
| CC | Central Committee |
| FEC | Federal Executive Council |
| LC | League of Communists |
| LCC | League of Communists of Croatia |
| LCK | League of Communists of Kosovo |
| LCS | League of Communists of Serbia |
| LCV | League of Communists of Vojvodina |
| LCY | League of Communists of Yugoslavia |
| YPA | Yugoslav People's Army |

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I. INTRODUCTION

The following propositions are widely recognized among U.S. government and other Western officials and analysts who are concerned with Yugoslavia:

- Yugoslavia is a decentralized country whose six constituent republics and two "quasi-republics" (Kosovo and Vojvodina, the constituent provinces of Serbia that have achieved de facto most of the prerogatives of the republics) play a key role in economic and political decisionmaking.
- Tito has been "succeeded," not by any individual, but by a collective leadership, with occupancy of individual positions rotating frequently.
- The Communist Party (known as the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) since 1952) differs from Soviet-type Communist Parties, in both its less disciplined internal organization and its less directive political role.

These three strands of recent Yugoslav political development have not been sufficiently analyzed in combination. The process of interrepublican bargaining in the federal Parliament on sometimes hotly contested economic and other issues has been observed since the early 1970s. The frequent rotation of Party as well as state leaders has been equally apparent in the last few years. Western observers have generally viewed the Party and the army as the principal integrative institutions in Yugoslavia under the decentralized political and economic conditions that have prevailed since the early 1970s. Analyses stressing the confederal nature of decisionmaking in state and public ("self-management") bodies have sometimes posited a "Party center"

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isolated from these decentralized currents.¹ Yet there has been relatively little analysis of the Party itself.²

(U) This report addresses the extent to which the LCY has been "confederalized" like the rest of the Yugoslav system.³ As such, the report seeks to answer the following questions: On what basis--federal appointment, confederal bargaining, or otherwise--do *Yugoslav* political leaders emerge and maintain their positions? By what standards can the Western observer judge the relative power of various Yugoslav leaders? What are the implications of this structure for the future of the political system and the stability of Yugoslavia?

(U) Section II reviews the background of political decentralization in Yugoslavia outside the Party structure. This summary review, covering ground familiar to the specialist-reader, is the necessary context for considering the evolution of the Party itself. Section III examines the changes in the organization and role of the LCY since the late 1960s. Section IV considers at greater length key developments within republican and provincial Party organizations.

¹ (U) This was the case with two recent doctoral dissertations on the subject: Burg, 1980; Ramet, 1981. (Full references are given in the Bibliography.)

² (U) The best treatment is Shoup, 1979. Also, Haberl, 1976, and Carter, 1982, are useful for developments through the mid-1970s.

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II. FROM CENTRALISM TO QUASI-CONFEDERALISM

The Yugoslav Communist political system has, in its 40 years of existence, undergone far-reaching changes. The revolutionary dictatorial centralism established at the end of World War II has, with fits and starts, given way to a post-revolutionary, less coercive, decentralized system. Tito imposed centralized Communist rule on Yugoslavia, yet under Tito the Yugoslav state evolved into a semi-permissive quasi-confederation.

This section will review the major steps in that process as they affected governmental, administrative, and "self-management" institutions.¹ Only in the context of this larger political structure is it possible to understand the evolution of the LCY itself. The Party leadership and Party organs were, of course, chiefly responsible for charting and implementing the decentralization of the political system, but discussion of the impact on the Party itself will be deferred to Section III.

ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

The decentralization of Yugoslavia can be dated to 1965, when a major economic reform was introduced, intended to ensure economic development by further reducing centralized state control over the economy and orienting it more toward world markets.

The primary impulse behind the 1965 reform was the disinclination of the republican political leaderships in the more-developed "North" of the country to continue subsidizing the industrialization of the less-developed "South."² The reform spawned so-called "dinar nationalism"--the espousal by republican officials in the North and South of the particular economic interests of their respective republics or regions.

¹ See Johnson, 1974, for a more detailed discussion.

² In terms of level of economic development, the "North" includes Slovenia, Croatia-Slavonia, Vojvodina, and Belgrade and its Serbian environs; the "South" includes Bosnia-Hercegovina, Croatia south of the Sava and Dalmatia, Serbia proper except for the Belgrade area, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Kosovo. (See Burks, 1971, pp. 52-59.)

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Once political opposition to the 1965 reforms was overcome with the ouster of Aleksandar Rankovic (the Party Secretary in charge of cadre and security affairs and heir-apparent to Tito),³ their implementation gave rise to a series of disputes involving republican economic interests. These conflicts included:

- The Slovene road-building crisis of 1969, when the Slovene government demonstratively resigned (but later withdrew its resignation) to protest the exclusion of Slovenia from participation in a World Bank infrastructural developmental loan (Slovenia lost that round, but won--i.e., shared in similar World Bank loans--on many other occasions).
- Controversy over the Belgrade-Bar railway project, promoted by "Southern" Yugoslavia to give the South its own international port, but opposed by Slovenia and Croatia as a wasteful duplication of transportation resources (the rail line was eventually built).
- Disputes over the role in Croatia of Belgrade-based banks and foreign trade firms, which were accused by Croatian leaders of siphoning off foreign exchange earnings from tourist and export industries in Croatia (the role of the Belgrade firms was limited in the 1970s).⁴

Such economic conflicts, highly political in and of themselves, fueled more directly political controversy (reviewed below). They were also the backdrop for--and in some cases directly inspired--the revival of cultural-social nationalism as well, which in turn further fanned political conflict.

CULTURAL-SOCIAL NATIONALISM

The Communist Party is the only political force that rose above the national hatred that undermined the stability of Yugoslavia, a country

³ See Section III.

⁴ See Johnson, 1974, p. 9.

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with a complex multinational character, during World War II.⁵ The Party effectively utilized the slogan "Brotherhood and Unity" in its rise to power during the war when Yugoslavia was dismembered and occupied by Nazi Germany and its allies. The "founding" charter of Communist Yugoslavia, the proclamation of the second session of the Anti-Fascist Council of the Popular Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ), called for the reconstitution of Yugoslavia as a federal state that recognized the autonomy as well as unity of its constituent nations. A federal constitution was promulgated in 1946 to appease national sensitivities, but the Communist political system imposed after the war was essentially unitary. Espousing revolutionary, supranational Yugoslavism, the Party leadership believed that forced socioeconomic modernization would end the disparity of economic development in different regions of the country and in the process would forge the many national groups into one Yugoslav nation.⁶

The vision of supranational Yugoslavism faded in the 1960s. In the process of promoting specific regional economic interests, the republican political leaderships began to stress the cultural/ethnic interests of their respective national groups. This occurred first in the republics, with "unhistoric nations" affirming their national existence for the first time in postwar Yugoslavia (the Macedonians in Macedonia, the Slav Muslims in Bosnia). But it also occurred in the North, especially in Croatia, where subsidization of the economic development of the South became a prime *national* grievance. The national consciousness of Yugoslavia's constituent "historic" and newly emerging national groups thus triumphed over the original supranational "Yugoslav" vision of the Communist Party leadership.

The result was greater linguistic and cultural-national self-expression in the late 1960s by all of Yugoslavia's constituent national groups:

⁵ See Johnson, 1974, pp. 5-6; Hondius, 1968.

⁶ See Shoup, 1968.

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- Display of national emblems, suppressed in the 1950s by the secret police, became legitimate.
- Old national anthems were revived and new ones were written, to complement the official state anthem.
- The 1971 census dropped the term "Yugoslav" as a national category.
- Albanian and Hungarian supplemented Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, and Macedonian as official state languages.
- The nationalities (as distinct from the "nations," e.g., Romanians in the Vojvodina) established their own cultural associations and began to use their own languages in dealing with local officialdom.⁷

Given the extent of intermingling of Yugoslavia's many national groups⁸ and the recent history of bloody national conflict, it was inevitable that manifestations of national affirmation within a larger Yugoslav community would be accompanied by signs of defensive and exclusive nationalism which, carried to the extreme, portended secession. As early as 1967, for example, a part of the Slovene intelligentsia had espoused a form of Slovene nationalism with separatist and religious overtones. The Slovene political leadership successfully suppressed this current, while continuing to promote Slovenia's economic interests within Yugoslavia.⁹ At the same time, a less powerful (but Church-influenced) Serbian nationalist current arose in Serbia and Montenegro. More important for the future, as internal security measures were relaxed in Kosovo following Rankovic's ouster, Albanian nationalist demonstrations occurred;¹⁰ these served as the catalyst for the "takeover" by Albanians from Serbs of the political apparatus in Kosovo.

⁷ See Johnson, 1974, p. 17.

⁸ Yugoslavia's various national groups are not located in compact regional settlements but are intermingled without assimilation throughout most of the six republics and two provinces; only Slovenia is virtually homogeneous nationally.

⁹ See Hartl, 1968, pp. 81-111.

¹⁰ See Ramet, "Problems of Albanian Nationalism," 1981.

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In 1970-1971, a Croatian nationalist movement gained momentum in Croatia, a multinational republic.¹¹ The exponents of Croatian national interests sought in effect to transform the Serbian population of Croatia (some 15 percent of the total) into a national minority. The Communist Party itself in Croatia began to lose political control to an alternative, non-Communist organization, the *Matica Hrvatska*, the historical Croatian cultural organization that increasingly resembled a typical nineteenth century national-radical political organization. The *Matica* more than doubled its number of local committees and increased its membership thirtyfold in a year. Croatian intellectuals debated the economic "exploitation" of Croatia. Campaigns were begun to oust Serbian officials and purify the Croatian language of Serbianisms. Extreme nationalists called for Croatia's membership in the United Nations, a national army, and even revisions of the republic's borders.

These developments fueled Serbian nationalism in Croatia (and elsewhere in Yugoslavia); in some regions Serbian nationalists gained control of local veterans' organizations, thus raising a second organizational challenge to the Party. After months of indecision, Tito intervened in December 1971, forcing the ouster of the Croatian leadership and instigating a wide-ranging purge of the Croatian political apparatus. An "anti-nationalist" campaign ensued, although no effort was made to reverse the trend of the previous decade toward non-separatist national affirmation.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE STATE

Reborn as a federal state in theory at the end of World War II, Yugoslavia was, as noted, in fact highly centralized in the initial postwar period. But the processes of economic decentralization and cultural/national reaffirmation by the constituent national groups traced above resulted in the late 1960s in a devolution of authority and decisionmaking from the federal to the republican level (termed

¹¹ Unlike the other episodes of nationalism just recounted, there is a considerable literature on the Croatian crisis of 1971. See Rusinow, 1972; Lendvai, 1972; *Crisis*, 1972; Johnson, 1974, pp. 18-19.

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"republicanization," in Yugoslav political parlance). This led in turn to a fundamental restructuring of the Yugoslav state after 1971.

The first step in this process occurred in 1967-1968, when constitutional amendments enhanced the importance in the federal assembly of the Chamber of Nations--in which the republics were represented on the basis of parity. New legislation mandated application of a national "key" (proportional national representation) in the federal bureaucracy. The assembly committees took on new importance in federal decisionmaking, as they became the forum for tough interrepublican bargaining. Decisions on specific economic, social, and other issues were generally reached in governmental bodies, rather than Party organs--a shift of responsibility for decisionmaking on concrete policy issues from Party to state bodies that had begun in the 1950s. But achievement by the republics of real influence over federal decisions carried with it the danger of paralysis, and this in fact occurred in late 1970 when the Federal Executive Council (FEC) was unable to carry through economic stabilization measures because of the absence of what had by then become necessary interrepublican consensus.

The possibility of a vacuum of central authority led Tito to propose in September 1970 the establishment of a collective state Presidency,¹² with representatives from each republic; in Tito's view, the representatives should be "men from the republics who are not republicans"¹³ and who could represent general all-Yugoslav interests. Tito may have thought of the collective Presidency per se as a sufficient organizational adjustment to the weakening of central power. But his initiative in fact focused the attention of the Yugoslav political elite on the basic structure of the state.

The result was a fundamental restructuring of the Yugoslav state. In mid-1971, after much interrepublican bargaining, 21 additional amendments to the 1963 Constitution were adopted, which in effect reconstituted the federal bodies as instruments of the republics, composed of their own representatives on the basis of parity.¹⁴ As Tito

¹² Throughout this report, "Presidency" means the top collective leadership body (*predsednistvo*), sometimes translated as "Presidium."

¹³ Speech by Tito in Zagreb, September 21, 1970, *Borba*, September 22, 1970.

¹⁴ See Burks, 1971, pp. 31-38.

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had proposed, a Presidency was established as the collective head of state, with three members from each republic, two from each province, and Tito himself. The FEC was reconstituted on the basis of parity. The republics assumed many powers formerly exercised by the federation, including some of the responsibilities for internal security. Republican-level authorities began to play a significant role in military affairs as Yugoslavia emphasized territorial defense.¹⁵ The federal status of the provinces was enhanced (to the dismay of influential circles in Serbia). Amendment 18 provided for their status as components of the federation, as well as parts of the Serbian republic.

Adoption of the 1971 constitutional amendments was followed immediately by a crackdown on nationalism in Croatia in December 1971 and a purge of "nationalists" and "liberals" elsewhere in the country in 1972. This evident political backtracking notwithstanding, the process of reconstituting the Yugoslav state on a quasi-confederal¹⁶ basis continued and was formalized in 1974, with the passage of a new constitution. The 1974 Constitution provided, in contrast to previous practice, that in the federal Parliament, the Federal Chamber as well as the Chamber of Republics and Provinces (as the Chamber of Nations was renamed) be constituted on the basis of parity. The state Presidency was reduced from 23 to 9 members but remained composed of representatives from the republics and provinces on the basis of parity. Article 33 stipulated mandatory interrepublican agreement before formal consideration of major legislation in the federal parliament.

This quasi-confederal state structure chartered by the 1974 Constitution has now been in place for nine years--three of them following Tito's death. During this entire period, the decentralized structure itself has not been seriously questioned in Yugoslavia. Eight constitutional amendments were enacted in 1981 to formalize the

¹⁵ The impact of these developments on the military is discussed at length in Johnson, 1977, 1980, 1981.

¹⁶ The term "quasi-confederal" is used in this report to describe the Yugoslav state since the mid-1970s, which has been more decentralized than any contemporary federal system but more unified than a confederation.

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succession arrangements, but they did not affect federal-republican relations.¹⁷ Since the early 1950s, constitution-writing and associated constitutional debates have served as a vehicle for addressing fundamental political and structural issues in Yugoslavia (in contrast to the mobilizational constitutional pseudo-discussions in Soviet bloc countries). The absence of such constitutional debate in Yugoslavia since 1974 suggests general acceptance of the quasi-confederal restructuring of the state completed in the mid-1970s and the absence of major challenges to the system of interrepublican consensus-building that it legitimized.

To be sure, following the outbreak of unrest in Kosovo in 1981, Serbia sought to increase the accountability of the provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina) to the Serbian republic. Yet advocacy by some Serbian theorists and publicists of constitutional changes to this end¹⁸ were not endorsed by the Serbian leadership, which called for implementation, not revision, of the constitutional provisions on the status of the provinces.¹⁹ In reaffirming support for the post-1974 constitutional order, Serb leaders have emphasized the federal and republican constitutional provisions on the integrity of the Serbian republic (including the provinces), which if translated into practice would signify a reduction of the additional prerogatives (beyond those specified in the Constitution) the provinces have achieved de facto since 1974.

Such efforts have been sharply--and to date successfully--rebuffed by the provincial leaderships. The key to their success is the fact that there are two provinces, not one. The Kosovo provincial leadership, reshuffled in 1981, has continued to defend provincial prerogatives even as it has sought to contain Albanian nationalism in

¹⁷ Stankovic, 1981.

¹⁸ For example, the call by a professor from Bosnia-Hercegovina for a reassessment of the 1971 and 1974 constitutional arrangements, at a discussion organized by the Marxist Center of the LC Serbia, reported in *Danas*, June 22, 1982. See also Bosnian leader Branko Mikulic's rebuttal, in criticism of an unnamed individual who questioned the 1974 Constitution (Tanjug, August 19, 1982, FBIS-EEU, August 24, 1982).

¹⁹ See the discussion in Section III.

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Kosovo.²⁰ Yet the new Kosovo provincial leadership, preoccupied with attempting to stabilize Kosovo, has remained on the defensive.

It has fallen to the Vojvodina leadership (dominated by *Serb* nationals from the province) to defend provincial rights vis-a-vis the Serbian republic. Article 330 of the Serbian Constitution provided that the Serbian assembly could pass legislation binding on the republic as a whole (including the provinces), but the provinces won *de facto* veto power over such legislation in the late 1970s. Some elements in Serbia tried to reverse this practice in 1981, in terms of pending legislation on the 1981-1985 republican economic plan and a new republican national defense law. Vojvodina's sensitivities have been respected to date (but with the consequence that Serbia failed to enact this legislation).²¹ Vojvodina has publicly based its defense on the 1974 Constitution ("We agreed there was no place for the thesis on constitutional changes"), yet in fact the province defended not only its rights as specified in the Constitution but the practices of the late 1970s that further elevated the status of the provinces as elements of the federation, rather than parts of the Republic of Serbia.²²

As Yugoslavia's economic situation worsened at the turn of the 1980s, the complex quasi-confederal state structure established in the 1970s was able to reach economic policy decisions only with great delays. Political circles in the South began to speak of the need for greater independent powers in the economic sphere for federal governmental bodies. In September 1982, Najdan Pasic (President of the Serbian Constitutional Court), in a publicized letter to the LCY Presidency, warned that the principle of mandatory republican consensus

²⁰ See the reported comments of Hajredin Hoxha (position not identified) at the LC Serbia and Marxist Center discussion, *Danas*, June 22, 1982.

²¹ Vojvodina exerted its prerogatives in other bodies as well. In December 1982, the Vojvodina Socialist Alliance (the mass political organization) refused to agree to a proposed decision of the Serbian Socialist Alliance standardizing ceremonies on Uprising Day in Serbia, claiming that Vojvodina's interests were neglected (*Borba*, December 18, 1982).

²² See *Politika*, June 27, 1981; Shoup, 1981, p. 4; report of LC Vojvodina Provincial Committee President Bosko Krunic, Tanjug, December 21, 1981 (FBIS-EEU, January 7, 1982). The complex titles of Yugoslav leadership positions are at times simplified throughout this report.

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was being carried to the extreme.²³ At Pasic's suggestion, a "political stabilization" commission was established under the chairmanship of Tihomir Vlaskalic, former head of the Serbian Party organization. But concrete constitutional or legislative proposals to modify the principle of consensual decisionmaking have yet to be advanced, suggesting again the extent to which--for better or worse--interrepublican consensus has become the publicly unchallengeable basis of decisionmaking in Yugoslavia's state bodies.

This review of the transformation of the centralized Yugoslav state into a quasi-confederation has--intentionally, but of course artificially--largely omitted discussion of the role of the Party, in fact the dominant political force in Yugoslavia and thus the real power behind this evolution. What has been the role of the LCY in the restructuring of the Yugoslav state? Has the Party remained a unified political organization in a decentralized state? How much has the Party itself undergone a similar decentralizing transformation? These issues are addressed in the following section.

²³ "...we should investigate to see where the framework established by the Constitution for applying the principle of mandatory consensus in decisionmaking has been exceeded...what was, for understandable reasons, accepted as the method of making decisions on certain specifically enumerated issues...has been spontaneously extended to almost all areas of political and self-management decisionmaking..." (*Politika*, September 29, 1982). Pasic returned to this subject in December 1982, criticizing the "spontaneous extension and near abuse of the principle of mandatory decisionmaking by consensus" (*Borba*, December 23, 1982).

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III. IMPACT OF DECENTRALIZATION ON THE PARTY

The previous section traced the "republicanization" of the Yugoslav polity since the 1960s. This process was in fact centered within the Party itself, and as such it affected the structure and organization of the Party even before the state apparatus was decentralized.

INITIAL DECENTRALIZATION

The process of "republicanization" was, as noted in Section II, born from disputes within the Yugoslav leadership over economic policy during the economic downturn of the early 1960s. Conservatives led by Rankovic sought to strengthen the influence of the central Party/police apparatus over the economy (and the country at large). Tito's speeches and Party documents of the period reflected this conservative impulse,¹ yet in fact reform views espoused by the Croatian and Slovene Party leaderships and economic officials and managers throughout the country won out; systematic economic reform, further downplaying state control and emphasizing market forces, was announced at the Eighth Party Congress in 1964 and introduced in mid-1965.

During this period, Rankovic firmly controlled the Party's central organizational machinery, as he had since 1945. That he was unable to affect more strongly the outcome of the Eighth Congress or block the 1965 economic reform was testimony to the degree to which the LCY had evolved away from the Bolshevik/Soviet model as early as 1964. In particular, it suggested the degree to which both the size and reach of the central Party apparatus and its accepted function within the political system had diminished.²

Following its landmark Sixth Congress of 1952, the LCY sought to adapt itself to the post-totalitarian, decentralized political system it introduced in Yugoslavia without diluting entirely its Leninist core. Organizational changes implemented in the 1950s, including

¹ E.g., Tito's speech in Split in May 1962.

² The number of acknowledged LCY functionaries declined from 11,930 in 1950 to 2,579 in 1957 to 1,123 in 1964 (Knezevic, 1979).

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decentralization or abolishment of much of the Party's organizational machinery and many personnel control (*nomenklatura*) prerogatives, sharply differentiated the LCY from other ruling Communist parties. Although the LCY refused to allow organized political opposition, its commitment to a redefinition of its leading role, emphasizing ideological guidance and political activity over administrative command, was more than rhetoric. The LCY largely abandoned the Leninist aspiration--practiced in Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1949--of social engineering.³ The limits on the powers of the central apparatus and the beginnings of a process of decentralization within the Party itself were evident at the Eighth Congress: The role of the Secretariat was reduced and the republican LC Political Secretaries became members *ex officio* of the LCY Executive Committee (as the top LCY body was then called).

Although Rankovic failed to block endorsement of economic reform at the Eighth Congress and introduction of the reform the following year, he continued efforts to thwart its implementation, utilizing the Party bureaucracy and secret police. His efforts were finally and decisively rebuffed at the Fourth "Brioni" Central Committee Plenum in mid-1966, when Tito ordered his political demise. A purge of Rankovic supporters in the security police and the Party apparatus, especially in Serbia, followed.

The "Rankovic affair" forced the LCY leadership to focus explicitly (for the first time since the Sixth Congress of 1952) on the role of the Party itself. The Brioni Plenum established a top-level commission charged with examining the Party's role in light of past and pending changes in the political system. The Fifth Plenum of fall 1966 was largely devoted to this question. On that occasion Mijalko Todorovic, a Central Committee Secretary, noted:

...it has not been made sufficiently clear what is really meant by the ideological-guiding role of the League of Communists, what it originates in, how it should be exercised, what effect it will have on the organizational forms of the League of Communists, and so forth.⁴

³ See Shoup, 1969; Johnson, 1972.

⁴ *Socialist Thought and Practice*, October-December 1966, pp. 30-59, at 36.

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One significant organizational change occurred at the Fifth Plenum itself: The Central Committee Secretariat, reduced in power at the Eighth Congress, was now abolished.

The subsequent months witnessed a wave of critical reappraisals of the Party's role by theoreticians and political leaders alike, who, *inter alia*, challenged the continued validity of the Leninist principle of "democratic centralism," endorsed the possibility of different formal views within the Party, and even granted the legitimacy of intra-Party "groupings."⁵ A number of Party theoreticians advanced theses about the Party's proper organization and role that were more radical than those aired when the Party's role was first subjected to critical examination in 1952. Yet this ferment had a limited effect on official LCY policy, indicating that even after Rankovic's demise, the advocates of far-ranging democratization of the LCY were in the minority. In April 1967 the LCY issued official "theses" on the role of the Party,⁶ but these were more a restatement of existing practices than a formula for fundamental organizational change. The same was true of LCY "directives" of June 1968.⁷ Proponents of democratization of the LCY continued to put forward proposals to this end in the second half of 1967 and early 1968. Whatever resonance these initiatives might have had was reduced by the student demonstrations in Belgrade in mid-1968, a challenge to Party control which resulted in renewed emphasis on Party discipline and unity.

If the year 1968 did not bring the "democratization" of the LCY, it nonetheless brought a fundamental restructuring of the Party in the sense of its "republicanization." In the course of the intra-Party discussion on the role and organization of the LCY initiated at the 1966 Brioni Plenum, republican-level Party figures called for a redefinition of "democratic centralism," not in terms of relaxing Party discipline binding on individual Party members, but in terms of enhanced prerogatives of the constituent republican Party organizations within

⁵ Details are given in Shoup, 1979, pp. 333-334, and Haberl, 1976, pp. 51-58.

⁶ *Politika*, April 27, 1967.

⁷ *Komunist*, June 6, 1968.

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the LCY. Mito Hadzi-Vasilev, an ideologist of the LC Macedonia, was perhaps the most outspoken on this subject:

The issue of the majority and the minority in reaching important political decisions and in constituting the leading organs of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia must be approached in a new way...independently of the number of delegates of this or that republican organization of the League of Communists, political decisions must be reached which are acceptable to all the republican organizations and each one individually.... No majority, no matter how overwhelming, can in and of itself justify a decision...within the LCY if it is clear that the decision is unacceptable to and cannot be carried out by even only one republican organization.⁸

Another Macedonian Party theorist offered ideological justification for "republicanization" with the claim that LCY organizations had to realize "partial interests" as well as "general interests" and that "the LC Macedonia legitimately had to represent specifically Macedonian interests."⁹

This explicit call for empowering the republican Party organizations with a veto power over LCY decisions was not, then or subsequently, endorsed by any authoritative LCY body. But it reflected the reality of devolution of power within the LCY to the republican level in the wake of the Brioni Plenum and the virtual dismantling of the LCY's central administrative apparatus. Such reorganization of the LCY was, as noted at the time, the "logical consequence" of the economic and social reforms of the mid-1960s;¹⁰ the latter both caused and presupposed the former.

The shift in the locus of power and authority within the LCY from the center to the republics was formalized in the fall of 1968.¹¹ The

⁸ Cited in Haberl, 1976, p. 59.

⁹ Stojan Tomic, in *Preglad*, July-August 1967, as quoted in Haberl, 1976, p. 60.

¹⁰ *Deseta konferencija*, 1969, p. 60.

¹¹ An early indication was the discontinuing in 1967 of a unified version of *Komunist*, the LCY weekly, and its replacement by nine editions (for the six republics, the two provinces, and the army); the latter edition is the one received by foreign subscribers. (Personal interview with a former chief editor of the Slovene edition, October 1981.)

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tense international atmosphere in the wake of the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia served to hasten rather than brake this process. The key development was the convening of the republican Party organization congresses in November-December 1968, in preparation for the upcoming Ninth LCY Congress. For the first time, the republican congresses were held before rather than after the LCY Congress and could thus influence rather than merely ratify its outcome. The republican congresses not only selected delegates to the LCY Congress, but they chose the members of the new LCY "central" leadership bodies as well. The distinctiveness of the republican LCY organizations was emphasized as they adopted their own individual Party statutes, distinct from the LCY statute. The provincial Party organizations of Kosovo and Vojvodina gained substantial autonomy from the Serbian Party organization.¹²

The Ninth LCY Congress, held in March 1969, formalized the expanded powers and autonomy that the republican Party organizations had gained at the expense of the Party center since the Eighth Congress. Republican delegates to the Ninth Congress were bound by the decisions of the respective republican congresses. The top organs of the LCY were completely revamped. A Presidency¹³ was established as the new supreme Party body, replacing the Central Committee; it was set up on the basis of strict parity, with seven representatives chosen by each of the six republican Party organizations and three representatives each from the two provincial Party organizations¹⁴ and from the army Party organization. The LCY Conference was established, with standing members selected on a parity basis, as a policymaking body intended to convene more frequently than a Party Congress. Thus the Ninth Congress introduced the practice followed to this day of proportional representation of the republican/provincial Party organizations in LCY Congresses (in terms of number of delegates) but parity representation in leadership organs.¹⁵ The Ninth Congress resolution proclaimed the

¹² Henceforth in this report, "republican" generally means republican and provincial.

¹³ *Predsednistvo*, often translated as "Presidium."

¹⁴ Vojvodina Party leader Mirko Canadanovic led the drive for representation on the Presidency for Vojvodina and Kosovo.

¹⁵ The principle is discussed by Andrija Dujic, in *Reorganizacija*, 1970, p. 101.

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basis on which the LCY was now constituted:

Instead of binding them in a centralized fashion, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia realizes a creative ideological-political synthesis of the views, positions, activities, and initiatives of the Leagues of Communists of the socialist republics.¹⁶

New amendments to the Party statute at the Ninth Congress abolished the remaining centralized organs for cadre affairs, formalizing the prior devolution of power on these matters to republican Party secretariats and cadre commissions. The republican LC organization (not the federal LCY) became the highest instance of appeal for a Party member.

Devolution of political power within the LCY to the republican/provincial level also meant rejuvenation of the Party's cadre. After the mid-1960s, younger Party officials of the postwar generation moved into leadership posts; this process was hastened after Rankovic's demise and after multiple-candidate, secret-ballot elections were introduced at the level of the communal (*opstina*) and district (*srez*) LC organizations. A significant if limited democratic reform was thus introduced in the LCY and contributed to the "republicanization" of 1968-1969.¹⁷ The generally better educated and more reformist postwar Communist generation replaced the "old comrades" of the Partisan era--in the backward South as well as in the better-developed North. The Ninth LCY Congress ratified this generational change: The new LCY Presidency contained only 12 members of the old Central Committee.

Evidently fearing that the new Presidency established at the Ninth Congress would be excessively influenced by the republican Party organizations, Tito proposed shortly before the Congress the formation of an additional top-level body, an Executive Bureau. This body was

¹⁶ *Deveti kongres*, 1969, p. 416.

¹⁷ Bilandzic, 1973, p. 258. Todorovic stressed that cadre rejuvenation "from below" was "bringing pressure to bear on the federation to solve problems" (*Komunist*, October 15, 1970). Data on the LC Vojvodina Provincial Committee demonstrates the extent of the rejuvenation. Only 24 percent of the 1960 Committee were postwar Party members; but 64 percent of the 1965 Committee and 92 percent of the 1968 Committee had joined the LCY after 1945 (Knezevic, 1979, p. 151).

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duly established by the Ninth Congress (over objections from the republics--the LC Macedonia protested at the Congress itself), albeit on the same principle of republican parity as the Presidency and formally responsible to it. In theory, the Presidency and the Executive Bureau enjoyed independent powers (and the Presidency reached decisions by a two-thirds majority vote); in practice, the supreme LCY organs themselves increasingly became instruments of the republican Party organizations--albeit the Executive Bureau less than the Presidency. Unanimity (i.e., the right of republican veto) was never formally adopted as the basis for passing decisions but was *de facto* observed; there is no known case since 1970 of a republican Party position being overruled at the federal LCY level, except in the crisis situations of 1971 (Croatia) and perhaps in 1981 (Kosovo). Official and unofficial LCY commentaries generally rejected the legitimacy of "outvoting" (*majorizacija*) in top LCY bodies.¹⁸ The consequence was that after the Ninth Congress, the supreme LCY bodies--like the federal governmental bodies--were often stalemated when the republican Party leaderships could not agree among themselves.

Following the Ninth Congress, LCY theoretical discussions reflected the practice of interrepublican consensus within the LCY and portended the further federalization of the Party. Such political leaders as Crvenkovski and Milosavlevski of Macedonia openly called for the federalization of the LCY. Others were somewhat more cautious; Tripalo of Croatia depicted the LCY in late 1970 as combining elements of both a "unified political organization" and a "federation of Communist Parties."¹⁹ Such voices were opposed by theoreticians from Serbia, who warned that federalization meant the paralysis and disintegration of the LCY (some of the same individuals would employ the same arguments a decade later), yet the reformist Serbian Party leadership headed by Latinka Perovic and Marko Nikezic failed to endorse the criticism.²⁰

¹⁸ In 1970, Croatian leader Tripalo referred to the defeat of the principle of consensus in 1968 (*Reorganizacija*), evidently in the June 1968 directive; yet it was apparently tacitly accepted.

¹⁹ *Reorganizacija*, 1970.

²⁰ Documentation is provided in Haberl, 1976, pp. 132ff.

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The powers of the republican Party organizations were further consolidated in early 1970 at the Tenth Plenum of the LC Croatia, which dealt with the so-called "Zanko affair." Zanko, a Serb from Croatia who was a federal assembly delegate (and vice-chairman) and LCY Conference member, was recalled from Belgrade for refusing to accept the directives of the LC Croatia. This case demonstrated that the republican Party organizations had won de facto recognition of an "imperative mandate" of delegates to federal bodies; when so instructed, delegates had to adhere to positions taken by the republican authorities.

The process of restructuring the LCY "from below" permitted and encouraged, but was then overshadowed by, the nationalist revival in Croatia in 1970-1971 reviewed in Section II. Having first encouraged that revival to increase its own legitimacy and authority vis-a-vis Belgrade, the Croatian Party leadership headed by Tripalo and Kucar found itself by mid-1971 more prisoner than orchestrator of the "mass national movement" in Croatia. With the outbreak of student demonstrations in Zagreb in December 1971, Tito intervened to force the ouster of the Tripalo-Kucar leadership and its replacement by a new leadership headed by Milka Planinc.²¹

ATTEMPTED RECONSTRUCTION OF A PARTY CENTER

The outcome of the Croatian crisis of 1971 showed that however much power had accrued to the republican Party organizations at the expense of the Party center, Tito still had the personal authority to replace a republican-level leadership (although he said it had been "difficult"). Yet in so doing, Tito did not "create" substitute Croatian leaders but (by his own account) let the crisis develop to a certain point²² and then threw his support to rival leaders who had backing within the LC Croatia (if not the Croatian population at large) whose dissatisfaction with the Tripalo-Kucar line had become evident in the second half of 1971.²³

²¹ See Rusinow, 1972.

²² Tito, remarks to the Presidency of the trade unions, in FBIS-EEU, December 20, 1971.

²³ See Antic, 1971.

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Tito acted through the LCY Executive Bureau (which issued the first official call, on December 8, for a change in the Croatian leadership), yet the Croatian crisis evidently suggested to Tito, Kardelj, Vlahovic, and other central Party leaders that the Executive Bureau itself (to which Tripalo, along with Bakaric, had been appointed by the LC Croatia) was excessively influenced by the subfederal LC organizations and was therefore unable to fulfill the integrating and supervisory functions Tito had evidently envisaged for it. After the change of leadership in Croatia, Vlahovic, speaking for Tito, announced plans to revamp the Executive Bureau, reducing it to eight members who would be physically present in Belgrade, would have individual functional responsibility for different "sectors," i.e., different areas of federal LCY affairs, and although selected by the republican LCY organizations, would not be bound by an "imperative mandate" from them.²⁴ This enhanced role of the Executive Bureau was resisted by the republican Party organizations, including the LC Serbia leadership (which warned, at the 23rd LCY Presidency session, of the danger of new central Party "secretaries"), but was nonetheless duly endorsed at the Second Conference of the LCY in January 1972. The Conference also established the post of Executive Bureau Secretary, intended to rotate yearly, which was assumed by Stane Dolanc from Slovenia.

In the wake of the Croatian crisis of 1971, the LCY reemphasized its internal unity and its responsibility for developments throughout the Yugoslav political system, especially personnel policy. When repetition of this injunction in leadership speeches and at the Second Conference failed to have the desired effect on the republican LC organizations, Tito took stronger action. In September 1972, Tito and the Executive Bureau issued a letter to Party members calling for greater "ideological and political unity of action," demanding attention to the principles of "democratic centralism," and threatening expulsions from the Party.

²⁴ *Proceedings of the 23rd Session of the LCY Presidency*, December 20, 1971, FBIS-EEU, December 21, 1971.

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Focusing now on perceived nationalism and favoritism toward economic managers in regions other than Croatia, Tito concluded that the reformist Serbian Party leadership, headed since Rankovic's ouster by Latinka Perovic and Marko Nikezic, had to be replaced. This occurred in October 1972; once again Tito showed he was able to replace a republican LC leadership--one that was more firmly entrenched than had been the Tripalo-Kucar team in Croatia. But for the first time, Tito encountered real difficulty in effecting a leadership change in the LCY--an indication of how weak the central Party organizational levers had become, even when reinforced by Tito's personal authority. Only after two and a half weeks, and after Tito's effort to dictate to the Serbian Party Central Committee by packing it with lower-level officials initially failed, was the LC Serbia leadership changed.²⁵ And only after the leadership change in Serbia did the LCY Presidency endorse retroactively the September letter.

The new President of the Serbian Party, Tihomir Vlaskalic, was a pro-reform professor of economics who had been a member of the Serbian Central Committee since 1968, while its new Secretary, Nikola Petronic, was a young member of the Central Committee Secretariat with prior experience in the Belgrade Party organization. Thus the new leaders of the Serbian Party did not surface from the political "underground" of Rankovic followers who had been retired after 1966 but who retained some following in Serbia; they were relatively inexperienced political unknowns.

The year 1973 brought further selective removals of major leaders in other republics who had become vulnerable to charges of excessive "nationalism" or "liberalism." The LC Vojvodina leadership headed by Mirko Canadianovic, which had pressed the cause of near-republican status for the provincial LC organization in 1969 and which had been allied with Nikezic and Perovic, was replaced. Yet the LC Kosovo leadership, headed by Mahmut Bakali, which was equally assertive in promoting provincial rights, remained in office. In Macedonia, Secretariat member Milosavlevski (a prominent "federalist" in 1967-1968) was ousted; yet his patron Crvenkovski (as noted above, an early advocate of republican

²⁵ For details see Stankovic, 1972; Moraca, 1977, pp. 316-324.

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powers within the LCY) initially retained his office (to be shunted aside in 1974). The leaderships of the Slovene, Bosnian, and Montenegrin Party organizations were not affected.

Tito clearly intended these leadership changes to counter the extensive decentralization within the LCY of the preceding five years and to secure greater cohesion and unity within the Party. There was no attempted reversion to the pre-1966 status, but Tito did attempt to revive an LCY "political center" which would not supplant the republican and provincial LC organizations but would have sufficient autonomous standing to influence them and ensure that LCY policies affecting the country as a whole were formulated expeditiously and implemented uniformly. The Executive Bureau began to assert itself as a federal Party leadership organ--a process furthered by Stane Dolanc's retention of its secretaryship following the expiration of his initial one-year mandate.

The modified organizational relationships within the LCY that Tito insisted on to strengthen Party unity were ratified in the resolution and Party statute adopted at the Tenth LCY Congress in May 1974. The amended Party statute took a stronger stand against intra-Party factionalism and emphasized democratic centralism more than had the 1969 statute.²⁶ Yet although many observers at the time interpreted the Tenth Congress as indicating a recentralization of the Party, that judgment was an overstatement.

The resolution of the Tenth Congress proclaimed that while the LCY could not be permitted to degenerate into a coalition of republican Parties, neither could it revert to a "centralist 'supra-republican' organization."²⁷ And in fact, the republican Party organizations and leaderships continued to enjoy extensive powers. The Congress reestablished the LCY Central Committee with 165 members, and reaffirmed the Presidency (with 39 members) as the supreme LCY organ. It retained the Executive Bureau, now renamed the Executive Committee, and increased it to 12 members. All these bodies were constituted by republican and provincial delegation, carried out at congresses of the republican and provincial LC organizations which again, just as in 1968-1969, preceded

²⁶ Stankovic, 1973, provides a detailed analysis.

²⁷ *Deseti kongres*, 1974, p. 229.

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the Congress.²⁸ No effort was made to reestablish a unitary *nomenklatura*; control of cadres remained essentially a republican--not a central--function.

The Tenth LCY Congress met only two months after promulgation of the 1974 Constitution which, as noted in Section II, completed the reconstitution of the Yugoslav state on a quasi-confederal basis. Tito and his remaining close associates of the Partisan generation--Kardelj (Slovenia), Bakaric (Croatia), Stambolic (Serbia), Kolisevski (Macedonia), and Vlahovic (Montenegro)--evidently believed that a more unified LCY could provide the necessary political backbone for the decentralized Yugoslav system. Yet in fact the Tenth Congress itself marked not the beginning but the high tide of recentralization within the LCY. Whatever Tito's intentions, the Party's internal structure could not be isolated from the federal and confederal principles accepted after the mid-1960s as the only viable basis of the Yugoslav political system, given Yugoslavia's multinational composition. Revived national consciousness, reinforced by a natural disinclination on the part of subfederal LC leaders to surrender political power and personal status, first limited and eventually undermined Tito's efforts to rebuild an autonomous Party center.

In early 1975, the LCY Presidency was increased to 48 members, now including all 12 Executive Committee members (only six were included in the Presidency selected at the Tenth Congress) and thus blurring the distinction between the two bodies.²⁹ This reduced the importance of

²⁸ The Presidency was composed of five members from each republic, three from each province, two from the army Party organization, and Tito. The Executive Committee was composed of six secretaries, who were also Presidency members (one from each republic), and six other members, also Central Committee members but not Presidency members, one each from the army Party organization and the two provinces, plus one each from Bosnia, Macedonia, and Serbia. Thus while the Presidency and the Central Committee were constituted on the basis of republican parity, the Executive Committee itself was not. This discrepancy led to a change in the Executive Committee in early 1975, discussed below.

²⁹ The six non-secretary members of the Executive Committee were made Presidency members. To maintain republican parity on the Presidency, three additional members from Croatia, Montenegro, and Slovenia were appointed. This crucial point was ignored in analyses of the day stressing the centralizing impact of the Tenth Congress, e.g., Slobodan Stankovic, "Yugoslav Central Committee Enlarges Presidium," *Radio Free Europe Research*, March 3, 1975.

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the Executive Committee, which in fact failed to play the semiautonomous role its precursor, the Executive Bureau, had played in 1972-1974, prior to the Tenth Congress. The balance of republican/provincial vs. "central" LCY power shifted again in favor of the former.

This shift occurred because the republican and provincial LCY leaderships continued to use the parity basis on which supreme LCY organs were constituted to pursue the "partial interests" of their individual regions.³⁰ In Slovenia, Bosnia, Montenegro, and Kosovo, the same leadership groups that had first charted the road of "republicanization" at the turn of the 1970s remained in place. The "post-purge" leaderships in Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia (where leadership change was much more limited), and Vojvodina likewise pursued the interests of their own regions (and regionally based political elites). The post-1971 Planinc leadership of the LC Croatia represented, as noted, a genuine element in the Croatian Party, one that had been overshadowed by Tripalo and Kucar's attempted alliance with the "mass national movement." Under Planinc, Croatia in fact obtained most of the economic prerogatives nationalists had demanded in 1969-1971. In Macedonia, Tito's wartime lieutenant, Lazar Kolisevski, had been pushed to the sidelines by Crvenkovski and others in the late 1960s for resistance to the devolution of power to the republican LC organizations. After 1974, Kolisevski resumed the helm of the LC Macedonia, yet in the late 1970s he too became a defender of the "partial interests" of Macedonia. The new Serbian leadership evidently had less (if any) indigenous support in the Serbian Party when it first assumed office in 1972. Yet, even if it could not have come to power without Tito's intervention, it too found itself representing Serbian republican interests within the LCY--albeit less forcefully and without the "liberal" overtones of its predecessor.

This propensity to promote Serbian interests was reinforced by a challenge "from within," in the form of a claim by the LC Kosovo leadership and the "post-purge" LC Vojvodina leadership for greater

³⁰ Dolanc, addressing the Slovene Party organization in early 1977, lamented "the habit of making democratic centralism valid only so far as the border of a republic" (*Politika*, February 18, 1977).

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federal, i.e., republican-like, status for the provinces at the expense of the provinces' position as autonomous entities within the Serbian republic. The two provincial LC organizations adopted different tactics to achieve this end. The Kosovo leadership, principally of Albanian nationality, headed by Bakali (as became abundantly clear in 1981), simply went its own way without challenge, often without even informing Belgrade (the Serbian authorities even less than federal bodies) of its activities, which were increasingly conducted only in the Albanian language.³¹

The LC Vojvodina leadership, headed by Dusan Alimpic, on the other hand, which was "closer" to Belgrade in terms of its predominantly Serbian national composition as well as geographically, actively promoted the cause of provincial rights--even beyond those specified in the 1974 Constitution. Its activism led to a confrontation between the Vojvodina and Serbian Party leaderships in 1977. The catalyst was a forthcoming reduction in the size of the LCY Central Committee Presidency (on which the republican LC organizations then had six members and the provincial LC organizations had four members), which raised the question of how the reduction should be distributed among the republics and provinces--specifically, whether the provinces would have one or two representatives. The Serbian Party organization used the occasion to raise the general issue of the status of the provinces. The Vojvodina Communists, on the other hand, intensified their insistence on near-republican status; for example, they sought terminological equality with Serbia by having the LC Provincial Committee renamed a Central Committee and the Provincial Conference designated a Congress. Whatever compromise was reached at the time only papered over the differences at the expense of the Serbian position, for subsequently the provincial LC organizations expanded their powers and claimed two seats each on the LCY Presidency (albeit without achieving terminological equality with Serbia). This immediately fed a nationalist backlash in Serbia.³²

³¹ This was evident well before the 1981 Kosovo crisis (see Igic, 1979).

³² Viktor Meier, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 7, 1978; Markovic news conference, Tanjug, December 15, 1977, in FBIS-EEU, December 16, 1977; retrospective accounts at the 18th LC Serbia Central Committee Plenum, *Borba*, December 25, 26, 27, 1981.

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REASSERTION OF REPUBLICAN INFLUENCE

The course of the Eleventh LCY Congress, held in mid-1978, reaffirmed the importance of the republican and provincial Party organizations vis-a-vis the federal center. The top Party organs were again reorganized, and the result was to reemphasize their interrepublican and collegial character. The membership of the Central Committee remained constant at 166 (20 from each republic and 15 from each province, including ex officio their presidents, 15 from the army Party organization, plus Tito), selected in advance by the subfederal LCY organizations and confirmed at the Congress. The Presidency was reduced from 48 to 24 members, still selected by the subfederal organizations on a parity basis (three from each republic, two from each province, one from the army Party organization, plus Tito). The Executive Committee was abolished as the executive organ of the Presidency, and nine new executive secretaries (generally of lower political standing than their predecessors) were selected on a parity basis from the subfederal organizations. Dolanc, formerly Secretary of the Executive Committee, was designated Secretary of the Presidency.

The Eleventh Congress noted that a lack of standardized executive machinery throughout the LCY had increased the difficulty of coordinating all-Yugoslav LCY policies:

In the organization of the organs of the League of Communists of the republics, the provinces, and the federation, there are some definite differences, especially with respect to the internal organization of the executive committees, the formation of commissions, and organization of professional services. These differences have not made any great problems for the work of these organs, but they have impeded communication between the leaderships of the republican and provincial parties and the organs of the [federal] LCY in the execution of current tasks.³³

But the Congress did not attempt to standardize the executive apparatus throughout the LCY (except by abolishing executive committees at all

³³ *Jedanaesti kongres Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije*, I, 142.

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levels); details of internal subfederal Party organization were left to those respective organizations.

Personnel shifts at the Congress testified further to the importance of the republican/provincial LC organizations and suggested a new standard for judging the relative power of LCY leaders. The comparative fortunes of Kiro Gligorov and Juri Bilic provide one example. Gligorov, an architect of Yugoslavia's reform economic policies, lost his seat as one of Macedonia's representatives on the LCY Presidency. But he retained his membership on the LCY Central Committee and did not assume republican-level functions. Bilic, a prominent member of the post-1971 LC Croatia leadership and a member of the LCY Presidency and Executive Committee until the Congress, gave up both posts (the latter was abolished) and his LCY Central Committee membership as well, joining the LC Croatia Presidency. In a Soviet-style Communist Party, the standing of a Gligorov would have appeared higher than that of a Bilic. In the case of Yugoslavia, however, the converse was true by 1978--and remains so today. Bilic retained his political base in Croatia (where most of his career had been spent and from which he would return to the federal leadership in 1982, as President of the LC Croatia and thus *ex officio* a member of the LCY Presidency). Gligorov, in contrast, lacked a corresponding base in Macedonia, for he had spent most of his career as a federal official, and his political importance declined.

This example was aptly cited by one veteran observer at the time to illustrate what had by 1978 become a rule of Yugoslav political life:

...senior and even middle-rank federal officials...are sent to Belgrade (and recalled from Belgrade) by the political apparatuses of the republics and provinces...no one who does not have a political base or powerful patrons in his own republic enjoys security of tenure at the federal center.... The lesson of the rule is that an ambitious politician should limit his time at the federal center, periodically abandoning even the highest offices there to return to his own republic and cultivate his political base. Those who have now done this should usually be described as smart rather than demoted.³⁴

³⁴ Rusinow, 1978, p. 11.

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The initial post-Eleventh Congress sessions of the Presidency, held in July, October, and November 1978, reemphasized its collective and collegial nature. A new post of Chairman of the Presidency was established, and Branko Mikulic of Bosnia-Hercegovina was named its first incumbent; Mikulic deputized for Tito and presided over Presidency meetings during Tito's increasingly frequent absences. Mikulic's appointment reduced Dolanc's political power as Presidency Secretary. The Presidency collectively, and not Dolanc as Secretary or individual members, was made responsible for the work of the executive secretaries and Presidency commissions; this was made clear in the Standing Rules of the Presidency, adopted at the October session and subsequently published. Formally, the Presidency took decisions by majority vote, but in fact it operated on the basis of consensus among the republican and provincial representatives.³⁵

This evolution of the LCY Presidency left the executive secretaries in the position of generals without armies reporting to a committee. Dolanc, as Presidency Secretary, was charged with "coordinating" their work, but their responsibility was to the Presidency itself. The remaining federal Party bureaucracy, the LCY Presidency Commissions (devoted primarily to intra-Party and not all-Yugoslav affairs), was subordinated to the Presidency collectively, not to the secretaries. The secretaries' role was diminished considerably, as suggested, *inter alia*, by their lack of public visibility.

These changes in the top LCY organs were reinforced by Tito's efforts of 1978-1979 to depersonalize and institutionalize this again more decentralized LCY structure through a campaign for "collective leadership" at all levels in Yugoslavia. Tito's initiative involved three distinct components: rotation of leadership positions, usually yearly and with strict respect to sequential republican/provincial representation; collective responsibility of all the members of a leadership body for its work, rather than *de facto* delegation of responsibility "by sectors"; and creation of regularized procedures for the work of leadership organs. In the LCY Presidency, Branko Mikulic, a Croat representing the LC Bosnia-Hercegovina, gave up the one-year post

³⁵ *Komunist*, November 10, 1978.

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of Chairman of the Presidency in October 1979 to Stevan Doronjski, a Serb from Vojvodina, while Dusan Dragosavac, a Serb in the LC Croatia representation, took over from Dolanc in May 1979 the two-year post of Secretary of the Presidency. Thus the rule of strict rotation on a republican and provincial basis of leading positions, applied earlier to the state Presidency and other governmental organs, was extended to the top federal LCY bodies.³⁶

(U) The organizational changes at and in the wake of the Eleventh Congress constituted the first effort in postwar Yugoslavia (and the first attempt in any Communist system) to establish depersonalized and institutionalized "rules of the game" in Party decisionmaking bodies intended to apply to the period of succession. They rested squarely on

³⁶ (U) "Rotation of cadres" also increased at lower levels; e.g., between June 1979 and March 1980, 65 percent of the secretaries of basic LCY organizations were replaced (Tanjug dispatch, December 3, 1980, FBIS-EEU, December 4, 1980).

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the principle of interrepublican consensus--within the LCY just as in other components of the political system. Between 1971 and 1974, Tito had sought to provide for succession through a "quasi-confederal" state structure complemented by a more unified LCY manned by "men from the republics who are not republicans." In the mid-1970s, he continued to rely on an informal grouping of the remaining wartime leaders--especially Bakaric (Croatia), Stambolic (Serbia), Kardelj (Slovenia) until his death in 1979, Kolisevski (Macedonia), Hodza (Kosovo), Doronjski (Vojvodina), and Mijatovic (Bosnia)--to provide greater Party unity than that which derived from the LCY's formal structure. But the alternative collective successionist arrangements Tito introduced in 1978-1979 suggested that he had come to believe that counterposing a more centralized organizational basis of the LCY to the quasi-confederal organizational principles of the Yugoslav state had become unviable and no longer promised to promote stability "after Tito."

THE POST-TITO PERIOD

The LCY Decentralized

Following Tito's death in May 1980, the collective successionist Party, as well as state institutions with rotating presiding officers (which operated prior to Tito's death but with Tito always in the background), functioned as planned. Rotation of leadership positions followed a complicated schedule giving each republic and province sequential representation at the head of each body while simultaneously insuring a republican/provincial balance among the heads of all the major Party, state, and public federal bodies at any given time.³⁸ In June 1980, Cvijetin Mijatovic (a Serb from Bosnia-Hercegovina) became head of the state Presidency, to be succeeded in June 1981 by Sergej Krajger (a Slovène). In October 1980, Lazar Mojsov of Macedonia replaced Doronjski as LCY Presidency President, to be succeeded a year

³⁸ The complex rotational system is overseen by yet another body, the Socialist Alliance Federal Conference Presidium's Coordination Committee for the Implementation of Cadre Policy in the Organs and Organizations of the Federation (whose chair also rotates). Its "allocation" of leadership posts by republic and province in February 1982 was reported by Tanjug (FBIS-EEU, February 18, 1982).

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later by Dragosavac, who gave up the post of Presidency Secretary in May 1981 to Dobroslav Culafic, a Montenegrin. If there were personal animosities among Yugoslavia's collective leadership, they were not exhibited in public and did not paralyze the successionist institutions.

The LCY functioned after Tito's death on the basis of decentralized political power. Public descriptions of the LCY as a federation of republican Parties remained (and remain) anathema (more so than in the 1967-1971 period), yet without Tito's integrative influence, the LCY became more decentralized than the Party structure of the early 1970s that Tito sought to partly recentralize in the wake of the nationalist ferment of 1970-1971.³⁹ Tito's lifetime position as LCY President provided him with a formal basis on which to exercise special "central" powers in the LCY, but the position of LCY President (as distinct from the revolving post of President of the LCY Presidency) was abolished after his death. The composition of top LCY organs, between as well as at Party Congresses, remains solely the business of the respective republican Party organizations. This was demonstrated during the replacement in October 1981 of Petar Stambolic by Dragoslav Markovic as one of the members of the LCY Presidency from the LC Serbia. There were reservations about Markovic on the part of representatives of other republican Parties, because of his deserved reputation as a "centralist" sympathetic to Serbian nationalism. Yet other Presidency members acquiesced in his appointment, "since it was the business of the Serbian Party."⁴⁰

The power of the republican LC organizations was also apparently responsible for a delay in applying the principle of leadership rotation to the republican Parties until 1982. As part of Tito's legacy, the rotation should have begun in early 1981. In fact, only the LC

³⁹ Privately, many Yugoslav officials grant this. An LCY Central Committee member from Croatia described the LCY as indeed a federation of republican Parties; Macedonian officials rejected the label "federalization," but in explaining how "democratic centralism" in Yugoslavia was attuned to "our [multinational] conditions," in effect supported the thesis (personal interviews, October 1981).

⁴⁰ Personal interview with an LCY Central Committee member from Croatia, November 1981. A second "Markovic affair" occurred in 1982, as discussed below.

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Vojvodina rotated its leadership prior to its 1982 Congress; Bosko Krunic replaced Dusan Alimpic as head of the Provincial Party.

The reality of a federal/confederal Party is testified to by the distribution of professional Party functionaries. Of 1,514 acknowledged LCY officials in 1981, only 25 were employed by the federal Party, while the rest worked for the republican and provincial Party organizations (the largest number, 578, for the Serbian Party).⁴¹ The "skyscraper" that houses the apparatus of the LCY is (for Belgrade) an imposing structure, but most of the floors are evidently filled with Serbian Party officials.

We lack evidence about the activities of the federal LCY executive secretaries and their staffs, and thus the process of decisionmaking at the federal Party level and especially the relationships between the federal executive secretaries and the republican Party apparatuses remains opaque. What is clear is that the executive secretaries appointed at the Eleventh Congress did not constitute a traditional Communist Party Secretariat, or even an independent Yugoslav "Party center" dictating to constituent suborganizations. As discussed earlier, the LCY, like the rest of the political system, gradually divested itself of a central apparatus after the mid-1960s; this process was not reversed but only temporarily slowed in the early 1970s.⁴² The "Eleventh Congress" executive secretaries had less political clout than their predecessors. It would appear that they were concerned primarily with coordinating views among the republican Party organizations and drafting federal-level Party documents. As one minor example, the LC Slovenia issued a pamphlet on the Polish crisis in 1980; the pamphlet

⁴¹ *Politika*, November 9, 1981. Earlier evidence suggested the total number of LCY "employees" was four or five times the number of "officials" (*Borba*, February 29, 1972), but the same ratios presumably apply.

⁴² The change in the number of acknowledged federal LCY officials indicates this (while suggesting how much the central apparatus had already declined by the mid-1960s). In 1965, there were 58 reported federal LCY officials (4.2 percent of total LCY officials); in 1973, 15 (1.6 percent of the total); in 1981, 29 (1.9 percent of the total) (Knezevic, 1979). The LCY budget has undergone a similar transformation; the LCY is apparently financed primarily by members' dues, and in 1980 the LC Serbia earmarked only 3 percent of the dues it collected to finance the federal LCY bodies (*Mladost*, February 22, 1982).

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was "loosely coordinated" at the federal LCY level (presumably with Executive Secretary Milojko Drulovic), which issued some similar material for intra-Party use.⁴³

After Tito's death, Yugoslavia had a year of calm. Then in 1981 three developments tested the decentralized LCY: insurrection in Kosovo, serious economic problems, and preparations for the Party's Twelfth Congress.

Intervention in Kosovo

In the spring of 1981, serious nationalist unrest in Kosovo led the federal Yugoslav leadership to carry out the virtual occupation of the region by internal security forces from the other regions of the country, backed by Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) units. Federal and Serbian LCY leaders then forced the ouster of Mahmut Bakali as head of the provincial Party organization, along with scores of his associates. The federal LCY thus demonstrated that it was still capable of imposing its will on one of its constituent parts and changing its leadership. Yet the corollary of this principle is that it was only in an extraordinary situation of civil unrest, threatening and thus uniting all other regional Party leaderships while undermining the position of the directly affected leadership, that direct "external" (i.e., federal LCY) intervention in the cadre policy of a subfederal Party organization was possible. Discussions within the LCY in 1981 about the "causes" of the Kosovo events provided ample documentation of just how self-contained the LC Kosovo had become.⁴⁴ Several republican officials indicated they first learned the details of the Kosovo events "in the press"; vertical Party reporting channels did not operate, and internal security channels apparently failed as well.⁴⁵ The LC Kosovo was probably more self-

⁴³ *Pota Poljske*, Ljubljana, 1980; personal interview with an official of the LC Slovenia Marxist Center, October 1971.

⁴⁴ See the "Bakali commission" report, *Komunist*, September 23, 1981.

⁴⁵ Personal interviews, October-November 1981. Asked, "Didn't Party officials in Belgrade and in the republics know what was going on in Kosovo?," a member of the Presidency of the LC Macedonia replied:

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contained than the other regional LC organizations, given the language barrier (in the 1970s, Party activities were conducted mainly in Albanian) and the sensitivity in Belgrade and elsewhere in the country to past repression of Kosovo. Yet the LC Kosovo was not an aberration; its achievement of "home rule" differed only in degree from that of the other republican/provincial Party organizations by 1981.⁴⁶

Intervention in the Economy

In late 1981, as economic conditions in Yugoslavia further deteriorated, the federal LCY involved itself directly in economic policy. In late September 1981, a new economic stabilization program was decreed by the 21st Plenary Session of the LCY Central Committee. Once again, a major political initiative was launched at an LCY Central Committee plenum--one aspect of the continued "leading role" of the Party in Yugoslav life. Yet in intervening programmatically in the economy, just as in intervening in Kosovo to put down unrest and change the political leadership, the supreme federal Party bodies acted not as a supranational Party "center" but on the basis of interrepublican consensus at the federal LCY level that economic problems were serious enough to require drastic measures. The 21st Plenum announced the formation of a new top-level advisory commission to deal with economic stabilization; the composition of the commission (headed by state Presidency head Krajger and with representatives from republican and federal Party, state, and economic bodies) was further testimony to the reality of political rule in Yugoslavia by a "polycentric polyarchy."⁴⁷

"It's a sign of how decentralized Yugoslavia is that we didn't know--or if we suspected, we did not want to seem to patronize the Kosovar officials by asking too many questions." Unresponsiveness of the Kosovo security organs to supervision or coordination by the Serbian security authorities was stressed by the Serbian internal affairs secretary at the 18th Plenum of the LC Serbia Central Committee (Tanjug, December 26, 1981, FBIS-EEU, December 31, 1981).

⁴⁶ Even after the outbreak of unrest in Kosovo, a Kosovar was jailed for filing a complaint about the LC Kosovo with the LCY Presidency! (Slavoljub Djukic, in *Politika*, June 28, 1981.)

⁴⁷ Rusinow, 1977, p. 346.

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The Twelfth Congress

The Twelfth Congress was, according to the LCY statute, due to convene in 1982. All elements in the LCY had an interest in meeting this schedule and thus proving the normal functioning of political institutions in the post-Tito period. Thus, two years after Tito's death, and with Kosovo and the economy as the main items on the real (as opposed to formal) agenda, the Congress duly convened in June 1982.

Preparations for the Congress. In the course of preparations for the Twelfth Congress, there was renewed attention within the LCY (in the form of theoretical articles, leaders' comments, and reports on the deliberations of the pre-Congress Statutory Commission) to the subject of "democratic centralism."⁴⁸ Most of the reported contributions to the debate were "anti-federalist," and at first glance, the discussion on this subject seemed to signal a campaign to preserve the integrity of a central Party structure against centrifugal tendencies. In fact, the discussion was the result of a rear-guard effort by forces in the Serbian Party, first and foremost to reestablish the authority of the Serbian Party organization over the provincial Party apparatuses and, second, to inhibit further decentralization of the federal Party itself.⁴⁹ Periodic reports in the Belgrade press suggested that the LCY Statutory Commission had discussed emphasizing democratic centralism in a manner that would have meant limiting republican Party prerogatives, yet senior Party officials rejected this possibility at the time,⁵⁰ and

⁴⁸ The literature is extensive. Major contributions include debate between Antun Zvan and Franc Setinc, *Komunist*, August 28, 1981, and September 11, 1981; remarks of Serbian theorists Dragomir Draskovic and Nenad Kecmanovic to the Statutory Commission, reported in *NiN*, July 19, 1981 (Draskovic warned of "a real danger from federalizing the Party" and warned it might turn into a "'confederation' of republican and provincial Parties"); Muhic, 1981; Laca, 1982 (perhaps the strongest advocacy of formal recognition of federalism in the LCY); Tanjug dispatches on the deliberations of the Statutory Commission.

⁴⁹ See especially the deliberations of the Serbian Association of Political Science, as reported in *NiN*, November 1, 1981, and in the daily Belgrade press.

⁵⁰ The discussion of democratic centralism was, one LCY executive secretary said privately, "much ado about nothing" (personal interview, November 1981), while Veljko Milatovic, head of the Montenegrin state

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in fact, as will be discussed, the "campaign" did not affect the organization of the LCY at the Twelfth Congress.

The proponents of more emphasis on "democratic centralism" were generally Serbs from Serbia proper, who were concerned more with the organization of the Serbian Party itself than the federal LCY; their concerns found support among the Serbian Party leadership. As noted earlier, the Kosovo unrest gave rise to a strong Serbian nationalist backlash, and in this context Serbian Party as well as government leaders sought to reclaim some of the authority over the provinces that had slipped away from them since the late 1960s. What ensued was a partial replay of the developments of 1968-1971 and 1977 reviewed earlier in this report: LC Serbia leaders sought to reclaim some authority over the provinces; the largely Albanian LC Kosovo leadership was preoccupied with trying to put its domestic house in order but nonetheless quietly resisted such claims; the Vojvodina leadership (largely Serb) saw itself threatened from Belgrade and defended itself by invoking constitutional provisions and practice that elevated the rights of the *provinces*. This had the effect of helping the Kosovars to resist pressure from the LC Serbia as well; without the Vojvodina factor, the Serbian Party would probably have succeeded in forcing a more far-reaching purge within the LC Kosovo.

Debate centering around the Serbia-Vojvodina-Kosovo triangle surfaced in a variety of Party forums after the spring of 1981 (including the 1982 discussion at the LC Serbia Marxist Center mentioned in the previous section). The issue was joined immediately after the outbreak of unrest in Kosovo, when the LCY and LC Serbia Central Committees criticized the LC Kosovo, *inter alia*, for its self-isolation,

Presidency, objected that "time has been wasted in loud, idle chatter about democratic centralism" (*Vjesnik*, October 31, 1981). An LCY Central Committee member from Croatia warned against concluding from published reports of the pre-Congress Statutory Commission that the powers of the republican Parties would be curtailed (personal interview, November 1981). The case suggests biased reporting in the Tanjug dispatches on the work of the Statutory Commission and/or in the Belgrade press and may serve as a warning against excessive reliance on Tanjug or the Belgrade press for coverage of federal or all-Yugoslav developments.

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while the LC Vojvodina Provincial Committee warned, on the other hand, of the dangers of "bureaucratic centralism" and "Serbian nationalism."⁵¹ The LC Vojvodina's stand was restated in even stronger terms at a plenary session of the Provincial Committee on December 21-22.⁵² Vojvodina leaders Krunic and Alimpic received some ambiguous public support from Bakaric.⁵³

Meetings of the LCY Central Committee on December 21 and the LCY Presidency on December 23 failed to confront the issue. It was debated openly at the 18th Plenum of the LC Serbia Central Committee (including the provincial LC leaders), which convened on December 24, 1981. Presidency President Vlaskalic reported to the Plenum, in a tone more of sorrow than anger, that coordination and even cooperation between the republican and provincial authorities had broken down in a variety of areas, including internal security and national defense, portending the internal "federalization" of the Republic of Serbia.⁵⁴ He was joined by Milos Minic, who lamented that the unpublicized 1977 compromise (mentioned earlier) had not been implemented and noted that this had given rise to "mistrust and suspicion." Other Serbian leaders, including Ivan Stambolic and Dragoslav Markovic, criticized the provinces in much stronger terms (and criticized Minic and the LC Croatia leaders Bakaric and Dragosavac for their efforts to mediate); Stambolic said it had to be made clear that "a province is not a republic." Such criticism was rebutted by Vojvodina representatives, including Pavle Krtenic (head of the provincial Socialist Alliance), Slavko Veselinov (head of the LC Vojvodina Statutory Commission), and LC Vojvodina President Krunic; Krtenic attacked by name LCY Presidency member Dragoslav Markovic. Kosovo leaders were less heated in their remarks but likewise refused to grant the Serbian claims. The outcome

⁵¹ Report by Bosko Krunic, President of the Provincial Committee, Tanjug dispatch, May 8, 1981, FBIS-EEU, May 12, 1981.

⁵² "...any thesis which generalizes the problem [of Kosovo] and which sees the solution as lying in fundamentally changing the relations laid down by the Constitution is unacceptable to us. These are centralist theses, whose exponents are nationalists and unitarists." (Krunic address, Tanjug, December 21, 1981, FBIS-EEU, January 7, 1982.)

⁵³ Interview in *Vjesnik*, January 13, 1983.

⁵⁴ Vlaskalic complained that since 1978, Vojvodina had unilaterally changed the basis of its representation in all-Serbian public bodies, including the Socialist Alliance, the trade unions organization, and the

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of the Plenum indicated little if any progress in reconciling the different views of the republican and provincial leaders; its conclusions, drafted by a five-man commission including the presidents of the provincial LC organizations during a two-week pause, contained least-common-denominator formulas which left open the disputed issues.⁵⁵

Nor were the differences on Serbian-provincial relations reduced in subsequent sessions of the respective LC organizations or at the republican and provincial congresses held in spring 1982. It was at those regional congresses that the primary stage setting for the Twelfth LCY Congress took place and republican and provincial representatives on the supreme LCY bodies were selected. The congresses signaled continuity in both organization and policies of the LCY. The LC Serbia Congress restated the concern of the LC Serbia leaders with more unified all-republic decisionmaking, but it failed to make statutory or other organizational changes that would have signified a limitation of the prerogatives of the provincial LC organizations.⁵⁶

The congresses of the other republican and provincial LC organizations, too, were characterized by continuity with past practices and provided restatements of the interrepublican character and de facto federalization of the LCY.⁵⁷ As Dane Cuic, head of the army Party organization, noted on the eve of its congress-equivalent, "The Leagues of Communists of the republics and provinces are equally represented in the LCY Central Committee and its Presidency, and on that basis it is impossible to have outvoting and the imposition of anyone's views."⁵⁸

youth organization; instead of locally selected delegates, Vojvodina's representatives were all selected at the provincial level.

⁵⁵ The conclusions stressed the "autonomy of the provinces and the unity of the republic" and declared the provincial LC organizations were "part of the unified LCY and part of the LC Serbia" (Tanjug dispatch, January 13, 1982, FBIS-EEU, January 15, 1982). Revealing accounts of the Eighteenth Plenum were published in *Borba*, December 25, 26, and 27, 1982; and by Tanjug on December 27, 1981, FBIS-EEU, December 31, 1981.

⁵⁶ The provincial LC organizations successfully opposed a proposal to define the LC Serbia as a "unified" organization (report on the LC Serbia Statutory Commission, Radio Belgrade, March 3, 1982, FBIS-EEU, March 4, 1982).

⁵⁷ Reviews of the congresses are contained in *Socijalizam*, May 1982, and Stankovic, 1982.

⁵⁸ Cuic, 1982, p. 34. In this article, Cuic also made the usual criticisms of both "federalization" and "bureaucratic centralism."

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This was just one indication that the army Party organization (speaking for the army) accepted fully the interrepublican character of the LCY.

A Congress of Continuity. The Twelfth Congress itself, when it convened in June 1982, brought few surprises.⁵⁹ It reconfirmed past policies, including the stands on Kosovo and the economy that federal LCY organs had adopted the previous year. It reconfirmed the organizational structure in place since the Eleventh Congress, based on decentralization and interrepublican consensus. The Congress ratified without exception (with one qualification, to be noted shortly) the members of the top federal LCY bodies selected earlier in the republics and provinces. The LC Montenegro, with 78,000 members and 78 Congress delegates, retained 20 seats on the Central Committee, just as did the LC Serbia, with 618,000 members in Serbia proper and 522 delegates to the Congress.⁶⁰ The position of Presidency executive secretaries was further downgraded. The Congress elected only three executive secretaries; it empowered the Presidency to select additional executive secretaries, and another was added in April 1983.⁶¹

The Twelfth Congress also endorsed (with one dramatic dissenting vote, to be discussed) the Statutory Commission's recommendations, which made minor modifications in the LCY statute (primarily to take account of Tito's death and the abolishment of the position of LCY President)

⁵⁹ The Twelfth LCY Congress was analyzed in FBIS, 1982.

⁶⁰ The Twelfth Congress confirmed the separate organizational status of the 12,000 Party members employed by federal bodies of all kinds. Yet while these "federalists" were represented by delegates to the Congress, they are not represented on the Central Committee. Yugoslav interlocutors have dismissed the suggestion that this body could portend a more recentralized LCY. Since most of the 12,000 are probably Serbs, the main impact of the change would seem to be limitation of the LC Serbia's indirect influence over federal bodies (since those Party members would otherwise be subordinated to the "democratic centralism" of the LC Serbia).

⁶¹ The Congress selected two holdovers from the previous group of executive secretaries: Trpe Jakovlevski, a Macedonian who prior to 1978 had been a member of the Federal Executive Committee (government), and Vlado Janzic, a Slovene who earlier had served on the Executive Committee of the LC Slovenia. The new executive secretary was Marko Lolic, a Croatian Serb who previously served as chief editor of *Borba*. In April 1983, the LCY Presidency appointed Svetislav Sojakov as an additional executive secretary; Sojakov had been a member of the LC Vojvodina Presidency and head of its cultural commission.

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but explicitly rejected *all* the modifications suggested in the course of the pre-Congress deliberations that would have signified even minor limitations of the powers of the republican and provincial LCY organizations.⁶²

This action gave rise to the only drama of the Congress--a counterproposal to establish Party organizations in large enterprises on the production principle instead of on a territorial basis, which would have undermined the exclusive subordination of basic LC organizations to republican or provincial LC organizations and thus (if carried out on any scale) greatly weakened the latter. The proposal was put forward explicitly to counter the "federalization" and "territorialization" of the LCY because the statutory changes proposed for this purpose had been rejected by the Statutory Commission. The proposal was advanced by Rade Koncar, director of a large enterprise (with branches throughout Yugoslavia), member of the New Belgrade LC organization leadership and son of a martyred Serbian Partisan leader from Croatia. Koncar's intervention was sharply rebutted by Statutory Commission Chairman Mikulic, but Koncar did not recant and subsequently resigned from his positions. At that time, he explained that he supported the existence of the republics in the Yugoslav state, but he opposed "federalization of the Party in any form" and had attempted to provoke intra-Party debate on this issue.⁶³

⁶² The Commission rejected suggestions that the subfederal LC organizations introduce uniform terms of office; that Congress delegates be chosen at the communal instead of the republican level; that the LCY Congress be held prior to the republican congresses; and that the separate statutes of the republican and provincial LC organizations be abolished. At the same time, it rejected proposals that would have meant de jure federalization, e.g., a proposal to make LCY Central Committee members responsible only to the organization they represented and not to the Central Committee as a whole (*Komunist*, October 9, 1981, July 2, 1982; *NiN*, July 11, 1982; report of Statutory Commission Chairman Branko Mikulic to the Congress, Radio Belgrade, June 29, 1982, FBIS-EEU, July 2, 1982). The LCY Statutory Commission subsequently confirmed that existing statutory differences between the republican/provincial Parties did not conflict with "LCY unity" (Belgrade Domestic Service, March 23, 1983, FBIS-EEU, March 25, 1983).

⁶³ *NiN*, October 3, 1982.

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(U) Koncar's views failed to win endorsement by any ranking member of the Serbian LC; on the contrary, he was criticized by the LC Serbia Presidency for advocating the "unitarian-centralist organization of the LCY."⁶⁴ Yet, as indicated at several points in the previous discussion, Koncar's strongly expressed concerns about the excessive decentralization of the LCY, and especially of the LC Serbia (with respect to the role of the provinces), were widely shared in the Serbian political elite. Some of this sentiment was articulated at the Belgrade City LC session where Koncar gave up his positions; theoretician Prvoslav Ralic, for example, voiced his concern with the "tendency to make the LCY a loose coalition of republican organizations."⁶⁵

⁶⁴ (U) *Borba*, September 24, 1982.

⁶⁵ (U) Ibid.

⁶⁶ (U) As Serbian Assembly President in 1970, Markovic had strongly opposed granting the republics veto power over federal decisions (*Borba*, September 27, 1970). He played a prominent role in the LC Serbia's efforts in 1977, discussed previously, to limit provincial rights.

(U) **The LCY After the Twelfth Congress.** As the Koncar affair reverberated in the LCY in the summer and fall of 1982, individual LCY theorists and publicists continued to criticize LCY federalism, while others called for radical decentralization.⁶⁸ But it was practice, not theory, that led the LCY to devote renewed attention to its internal structure. At the Third Central Committee Plenum in September 1982,⁶⁹ LCY Presidency President Ribicic lamented that the economic stabilization measures directed in late 1981 and reendorsed by the Twelfth Congress were not being sufficiently implemented. He ascribed part of the blame to the passive role of the supreme LCY organs; the Presidency, he said, had been too much a "simple recorder of different attitudes and conditions in the republics and provinces" and the LCY's constituent republican organizations had not implemented agreed policies. Appealing for the "emancipation" of the LCY from narrow republican views, Ribicic noted the Presidency had asked the republican and provincial LC heads for information on the failure of the republics and provinces in the late summer to set aside agreed foreign exchange reserves for federal oil imports.

(U) This was an unusual case of direct intervention by the top LCY organ on a specific economic matter that should have been dealt with (according to the formal and informal rules of the system) by governmental bodies, and an LC Serbia leader pointed out the danger of the Presidency becoming embroiled in such details. Ribicic's call for greater accountability of the republican LC leaderships to the federal Party center was, on the other hand, endorsed by Franc Popit,⁷⁰ who had

⁶⁸ (U) See, e.g., Jovan Marjanovic, in *Vecernje novosti*, October 7, 1982; Nenad Kecmanovic, in *Danas*, December 7, 1982 (criticizing Party federalism); Slobodan Inic, in *Danas*, August 10, 1982 (criticizing Party centralism).

⁶⁹ (U) Tanjug report, September 25, 1982, FBIS-EEU, September 28, 1982.

⁷⁰ (U) *Delo*, September 27, 1982. Popit charged that the LCY Presidency feared "to call on an individual republican or provincial leadership to defend itself," since "such action would be considered interference in the internal affairs of one or another republic or province." He added

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served as LC Slovenia President prior to the Twelfth Congress; during his tenure, the LC Slovenia had energetically defended its autonomy. Popit's position could be interpreted as indicating that, given Yugoslavia's severe economic problems, occupants of federal LCY posts, although they were republican officials selected by and responsive to their constituent republican Party organization, could acquire a broader outlook on all-Yugoslav issues. Yet there is another hypothesis that better explains Popit's injunction. It may well be that Slovenia and the "North" (in the sense of economic development) have done the most to implement the agreed measures of economic stabilization, and that the greater responsibility of the republican LC organizations called for by Ribicic and Popit is in fact the specific responsibility of republics other than their own. This interpretation is supported by Popit's strong condemnation two months later of efforts to "centralize" Yugoslavia and "liquidate the republics."⁷¹

The LCY continued to grapple with the issue of federal responsibility of its constituent parts as it sought consensus on economic policy--especially austerity measures and Western financial assistance--in late 1982 and early 1983. The Fourth LCY Central Committee Plenum of December 1982 debated the matter, with some speakers stressing the all-Yugoslav responsibilities of the republican LC organizations, while others focused on their prerogatives.⁷² Bilic,

that Presidency executive secretaries should monitor republican and provincial LC developments, at least to the degree they had between the Eleventh and Twelfth Congresses.

⁷¹ Popit speech to the Slovene Socialist Alliance, *Borba*, November 25, 1982. Other statements of the LC Slovenia also support this interpretation. The Third Central Committee Plenum of the LC Slovenia, held in September 1982 on the eve of the Third LCY Plenum, stressed the role of the republics, while in March 1983, the LC Slovenia's new head, Marinc, deplored the fact that "agreed decisions" were still not being implemented, i.e., by other republican/provincial leaderships (*Borba*, March 29, 1983).

⁷² Thus LCY Presidency Secretary Stojanovic warned against "overstating partial interests" by the republican LC organizations, yet his fellow Bosnian, Pozderac, took the opposite tack, warning that that very thesis fueled centralism as well as nationalism. Milan Dzajkovski from Macedonia appealed for a look at the "myth of unitarism and centralism," since all-Yugoslav coordination involved too many compromises with republican and provincial interests (Tanjug, December 24, 1982, FBIS-EEU, December 27, 1982; *Borba*, December 26, 1982).

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President of the LC Croatia and thus an ex officio member of the LCY Presidency, was the most publicly outspoken on the issue. He interpreted Popit's Third Plenum statement as meaning not that LCY intervention in a republican LC organization was needed at present, but that the Presidency collectively had to be able to intervene "as Tito did" in a timely manner if a serious situation developed in one region, as had happened in Kosovo. The need for interrepublican consensus within the LCY on economic issues was an "objective matter," yet this did not mean that "partial interests" had to be realized daily. "We have not yet clearly defined the proper role of the Party in practice."⁷³

Bilic accurately outlined the problem, but the notion that it could be eased by redefining the Party's role was an illusion. Just as "theory could not resolve the dilemma of the continued existence of a totalitarian Party in a non-totalitarian state"⁷⁴ in the initial period after the Tito-Stalin split, so today there is no doctrinal or formal resolution to the dilemma of rule by a single Party in the quasi-confederal Yugoslav state. How successfully the LCY will deal with that dilemma depends primarily on the outlook and composition of the republican and provincial Party leaderships. Four of the regional leaderships are surveyed in the next section.

⁷³ Bilic interviews, *NiN*, October 10, 1982; *Vjesnik*, January 1-3, 1983.

⁷⁴ Johnson, 1972, p. 218.

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IV. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REPUBLICAN AND PROVINCIAL LC ORGANIZATIONS

This section discusses in greater detail developments within the republican and provincial Party organizations in the 1970s and early 1980s, with special attention to (1) the Croatian Party and (2) the Serbian and provincial Parties.¹ Some of the discussion dealing with interrepublican/provincial Party relations was previewed in Section III.

INTRODUCTION

It is generally appreciated that the Yugoslav political system has been decentralized and de-Leninized since the 1950s. This process has entailed, within the republics as on the federal level, the proliferation and seemingly endless reorganization of institutions. The assemblies (parliaments) have assumed real decisionmaking powers vis-a-vis the state executive apparatus. Social functions formerly performed by state bodies--for example, education and culture--have been taken over by so-called "self-managing interest communities" (*samoupravne interesne zajednice*), comparable in some respects to public authorities in the American context. Enterprises and their workers' councils were disaggregated in the mid-1970s into so-called "basic organizations of associated labor" (*osnovne organizacije udruzenih rad*). "Social councils" (*drustveni odbori*) composed of representatives of the above institutions, plus the trade unions and the Party, were set up as policy oversight bodies. At the republican level, the "social councils" have frequently served as the forum where intra-elite disputes on policy measures are thrashed out. Thus in Slovenia, it was in the social councils that "republican" positions on economic subsidies to Kosovo, on education reform, and on the proposed "travel tax" of 1981 were determined.²

¹ The scope of this study provided for a selective and not a comprehensive look at the subfederal LCY organizations. The LC Croatia, LC Serbia, LC Kosovo, and LC Vojvodina were chosen because of the availability of information on the first two and because of the importance of the Serbia-Vojvodina-Kosovo relationship.

² Personal interviews with Slovene officials, October 1971.

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This political system provides for a significant degree of "interest aggregation" in the Western sense--but with the Party always in the background, influencing or determining personnel appointments to other bodies and able to intervene more directly if necessary.

Available data about the precise role of the republican Party organizations as such in specific cases is too fragmentary to permit generalization. Both critics and supporters of "Party federalism" assert that "democratic centralism" still characterizes Party organization at the republican level, even if it has been replaced by consensual decisionmaking at the federal level. "Democratic centralism" accurately characterizes the discipline republican LC organizations can impose on their members if they so choose (they frequently do not). In its original Leninist or Bolshevik meaning, "democratic centralism" overstates the direct role of the republican LC organizations on decisionmaking. On this scale, Yugoslavia occupies ill-defined middle ground between Soviet-style Communist Party systems and authoritarian but more pluralist one-party systems, such as that in Mexico.

The role played by the republican-level Party organizations has depended importantly on the specific leaderships at their helm--hence the need to understand republican LC leadership developments in order to analyze regional developments, as well as to evaluate likely key actors in the all-Yugoslav leadership.

LEADERSHIP OF THE LC CROATIA

Milka Planinc headed the LC Croatia (LCC) from the ouster of Mika Tripalo in 1971 until her appointment as Chairman of the Federal Executive Council (Premier) in 1982--her first federal post. She was succeeded by Jure Bilic, who served on the LCY Executive Committee in Belgrade until 1978 but then returned to the LCC Presidency in Zagreb. The position of LCC Secretary was filled until 1974 by Josip Vrhovec, who later moved to the LCY Presidency and the Federal Executive Council. He was followed by Dusan Dragosavac (a Croatian Serb), who entered the LCY Presidency and became its Secretary in 1980. Dragosavac was succeeded in turn by Milutin Baltic (likewise a Croatian Serb), who remained in Croatia after his replacement in 1982 by Marijan Kalanj, formerly an LCC Presidency member and trade union official.

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(U) The LCC Presidency experienced substantial turnover in the 1970s. Only 7 of the 20 members of the 1974 Presidency were reelected to the 1978 Presidency; only 5 of the 22 members of that body (none of them members in 1974) were included in the 1982 Presidency. Croatian Serbs, overrepresented in the LCC in comparison to their percentage of the population, continued to be overrepresented in the Presidency. While the LCC leadership experienced considerable turnover, this was principally circulation within Croatia itself. Of the 20 members of the 1974 Presidency, 13 occupied federal posts from 1970 to date; of the 22 members of the 1978 Presidency, 9; of the 20 members of the 1982 Presidency, 8. (See Table 1.)

³ (U) Details are given in Johnson, 1974, pp. 28-29; Johnson, 1977, pp. 44-47. The Seventh LCC Congress roundly condemned this "centralist faction" in the LCC (*Sedmi kongres Saveza komunista Hrvatske*, 1974, p. 185).

Table 1

(U) LEADERSHIP TURNOVER IN THE LCC PRESIDENCY

(UNCLASSIFIED)

| Year | No. of Members | Number Reelected | No. with Federal Experience | President | Secretary |
|------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1974 | 20 | (a) | 13 | Planinc, Milka | Dragosavac, Dusan |
| 1978 | 22 | 7 | 9 | Planinc, Milka | Baltic, Milutin |
| 1982 | 20 | 5 ^b | 8 | Bilic, Jure | Kalanj, Marijan |

(U) But as preparations for the LCY and republican Party Congresses of 1978 got underway, with changes in leadership posts on the agenda, evidence mounted of greater personal tensions within the LCC leadership. Bakaric and Tito influenced, but did not exclusively determine, Croatian leadership appointments. There were hints of opposition from within the LCC to any official assuming an important leadership post who had spent much of his recent career in Belgrade.

1976, Bilic publicly condemned President Nixon's 1971 visit to Zagreb as part of an American policy "of Yugoslavia's disintegration" (Bilic interview, Nin, December 12, 1976).

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Following the LCC Congress of 1978, which reelected Planinc as LCC head, but replaced Dragosavac with Baltic as Secretary, tensions within the LCC leadership continued. These divisions evidently contributed to a harder policy line. Baltic, while careful to distance himself from Serbian nationalism, was apparently the major advocate of a harder line. Blazevic authored a number of sharp attacks on the Catholic church and the Pope that worsened church-state relations in Croatia and adversely affected Yugoslavia's relations with the Vatican. Bakaric continued to espouse more moderate policies.

Leadership changes in Croatia after the 1982 LCC and LCY Congresses seemed to improve this situation. Bilic replaced Planinc as head of the LCC. Bakaric's death in early 1983 created vacancies on both the Yugoslav state Presidency and the LCY Presidency. The former post was filled by Mika Spiljak; the latter was filled by Jusip Vrhovec, formerly Minister of Foreign Affairs. These developments seemed to strengthen Bilic's hand, while creating the leadership basis for less doctrinaire policies. This brief review suggests that, in terms of the functioning of the Yugoslav Communist system, whatever efforts Tito still made to intervene in LCC personnel affairs in the late 1970s had become ineffectual and counterproductive. It also suggests that institutionalization of the principle of leadership rotation--resisted initially by some republican LC leaders--had a positive effect, hastening the departure of some deadwood and strengthening rather than weakening leadership cohesion.⁵

LEADERSHIP OF THE LC SERBIA

Tihomir Vlaskalic, Tito's choice to head the LC Serbia (LCS) after the purge of Perovic and Nikezic in 1972, remained as its President until the mandated 1982 rotation, when the post was taken over by Dusan Ckrebic, formerly a Presidency member and President of the Serbian

⁵ Viktor Meier, in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 26, 1982. To date, these developments argue against Steven Burg's thesis (Burg, 1981, p. 40) that extension of leadership rotation from the federal to the republican level would undermine the stability of the system.

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Assembly. Nikola Petronic, the first post-purge LCS Secretary, was replaced in early 1974 under unusual circumstances by Djordje Lazic, a Serbian Party and trade union official, who was replaced in turn by Spiro Galovic (who had been a Belgrade municipal Party official) in 1978 and Radisa Gacic in 1982.

The LCS Presidency was reshuffled substantially during this period. Of the 31 members of that body in 1974, 13 were included in the 1978 Presidency. Of the 25 members of the 1978 Presidency, 6 were included among the 28 Presidency members elected in 1982, with only one of those 6 serving since 1974. More LCS Presidency members held federal-level positions than was true of the LCC, but the same trend toward intrarepublican leadership rotation developed: Of the 31 members of the 1974 Presidency, 22 held federal positions; of the 25 members of the 1978 Presidium, 13; of the 28 members of the 1982 Presidency, 12. (See Table 2.)

The "post-purge" leadership of the LCS was lackluster in comparison to the Nikezic-Perovic team. It emphasized political control, greater supervision by the Party of personnel appointments at

Table 2
LEADERSHIP TURNOVER IN THE LCS PRESIDENCY

| Year | No. of Members | Number Reelected | No. with Federal Experience | President | Secretary |
|------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1974 | 31 | (a) | 22 | Vlaskalic, Tihomir | Lazic, Djordje |
| 1978 | 25 | 13 | 13 | Vlaskalic, Tihomir | Galovic, Spiro |
| 1982 | 28 | (b) | 12 | Ckrebic, Dusan | Gacic, Radisa |

^a Not calculated.

^b One member of the 1982 Presidency served continuously since 1974.

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all levels, and limits on managerial or economic entrepreneurship. It was careful to keep its distance from Rankovic and from other "old comrades" who demonstrated in the late 1960s that they still had a political base at lower levels in Serbia. Yet, in contrast to the situation of the Planinc leadership in Croatia vis-a-vis Croatian nationalism, the LCS leadership headed by Vlaskalic moved closer to Serbian (and thus Great Serbian) nationalism. The LCS leadership reflected in part some of the popular apprehension in Serbia about the degree of decentralization in the Party and state structures in the 1970s, which was interpreted as detrimental to Serbia's interests. Yet the real cause of dissatisfaction was the specific issue of the accrual of republican-like status on the part of Kosovo and Vojvodina provinces, and by their Party organizations in particular. As discussed in Section III, matters came to a head within the LCS in 1977, in the dispute between the Serbian and Vojvodina Party leaders over the role of the provincial LC organizations and the status of the provinces generally.

After 1978, the LCS leadership was increasingly affected by the nationalist backlash in Serbia. Within that leadership, two principal groupings apparently coalesced. The first, headed by Milos Minic (then primarily involved in Yugoslav foreign affairs and other federal activities), sought to restrain Serbian nationalism. The second, headed by Dragoslav Markovic and including LCS Presidency Secretary Galovic, increasingly backed by Petar Stambolic and with the support of other leaders, including Ivan Stambolic of the Belgrade Party organization (evidently a nephew of Petar), adopted more nationalist positions. The nationalist group was, as suggested in Section III, strong enough to successfully oppose Minic as a candidate for the post of LCY Presidency President, but evidently nationalist enough to cause Tito and leaders from other republics to rally against them. The hand of the Markovic group was strengthened by the Kosovo crisis of 1981 and the upsurge of Serbian nationalist feelings that it induced.

Taking a strong stand on the issues of Serbian republican powers over the provinces and the extremely emotional issue of outmigration from Kosovo, the Markovic group served to sharpen criticism

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by the LCS leadership as a whole of centrifugal tendencies in Yugoslavia.⁶

(U) In the spring of 1983, the LCS leadership remained in flux, and it was premature to conclude that the Markovic nationalist group had ceased to be a political force in Serbia. New incidents in Kosovo could easily refuel Serbian nationalism, indirectly or directly impacting on the LCS leadership. But the evidence to date suggests that the Markovic nationalist group is on the decline and that a more moderate leadership constellation is emerging, with Ljubicic playing a key role.⁷ Thus in the LCS, as in the LCC, the cadre rotation of 1982 has apparently had a salutary rather than a negative effect, in terms of the quality of the republican leadership, its attitude to nationalism, and the stability of the Yugoslav system.

⁶ (U) For example, Galovic's address to the Serbian Party Congress, Tanjug, May 1982, FBIS-EEU, June 1, 1982.

⁷ (U) *Danas*, June 8, 1982. This illuminating analysis of leadership elections in the republican and provincial Parties showed more variation in voting behavior, and thus arguably more evidence of intra-elite tensions in the LCS than in any other LC republican or provincial organization; the LC Bosnia-Hercegovina showed the least variance.

⁸ (U) See LCS President Ckrebic's appeal for political dialogue and moderation, at the March 7, 1983, LCS Central Committee Plenum, *Politika*, March 8, 1983.

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THE PROVINCIAL LC LEADERSHIPS

In Vojvodina, Dusan Alimpic (a Vojvodina Serb) headed the Party organization from the ouster of Canadianovic (who was allied with Nikezic and Perovic) in late 1972 until his replacement by Bosko Krunic (a Vojvodina Serb), then Secretary of the provincial Party organization, in 1981. (As noted, this was the only case of rotation of a republican/provincial Party president prior to the round of congresses in 1982.) Krunic was in turn replaced by Marko Djuricin (an LC Vojvodina (LCV) Presidency member, a Vojvodina Serb) at the LCV Congress in 1982, and Krunic became one of the LCV representatives on the LCY Presidency. Nandor Major (earlier a writer and Socialist Alliance activist) was elected LCV Secretary in 1974, to be replaced by Krunic in 1978. Following the latter's selection as President of the Party organization, he was succeeded as Secretary by Vasa Milic (head of the LCV's international relations commission), who was in turn replaced by Sreta Stajic (who headed the LCV's commissions on the political system and on ideology) in 1982.

As Table 3 indicates, 10 of the 28 members of the 1974 LCV Presidency were included in the 1978 Presidency. Of the 24 members of that body, 8 were included in the 1982 Presidency (with two others elected who had served on the 1974 Presidency). Of the 28 members of the 1974 Presidency, 14 held federal positions; of the 24 members of the 1978 Presidency, 11; of the 21 members of the 1982 Presidency, 10. Thus the LCV, too, experienced substantial turnover in the 1970s; about half of the members of its leaderships had some federal experience but evidently little experience in Serbian republican affairs per se.

When Dusan Alimpic assumed the helm of the Vojvodina Party organization in 1972, he was widely regarded as a tough Serb apparatchik who, drawing on his internal security background, would impose hard-line centralist policies on the province. While Alimpic did lead a campaign against liberal and managerial tendencies in Vojvodina, it was under his leadership that (as discussed in Section III) the Vojvodina Party organization further expanded the prerogatives it had won under

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Table 3

LEADERSHIP TURNOVER IN THE LCV PRESIDENCY

| Year | No. of Members | Number Reelected | No. with Federal Experience | President | Secretary |
|------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1974 | 28 | (a) | 14 | Alimpic, Dusan | Major, Nandor |
| 1978 | 24 | 10 | 11 | Alimpic, Dusan | Krunic, Bosko |
| 1982 | 21 | ^b 8 | 10 | Djuricin, Marko | Stajic, Sreta |

^aNot calculated.^bTwo 1974 Presidency members not reelected in 1978 were also included in the 1982 Presidency.

Canadanovic at the turn of the 1970s. It was Alimpic who stood up to the Serbian Party organization leadership in 1977 and basically won. It remains unclear why Alimpic agreed to give up the post of head of the provincial Party organization, when his counterparts elsewhere in Yugoslavia refused; what is clear is that Bosko Krunic, his successor, defended Vojvodina rights with even greater vigor in the wake of the Kosovo crisis. Having assumed his post in April 1981, Krunic was thus subject to rotation in 1982, but his successor, Djuricin, continued the same course (with support from Krunic, now on the LCY Presidency).

This continuity in the policies of the LCV, notwithstanding the substantial rotation of leadership cadres, suggests the emergence of a cohesive and consolidated regional political elite. The outlook of that elite is shaped more by regional than national considerations. Precisely because it is made up primarily of Serbs, the Vojvodina Communist leadership has become a determined opponent of, rather than an ally of, Great Serbian forces in Serbia itself. As such, the

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Serb-dominated Vojvodina leadership has become the ally of the strongly Albanian LC Kosovo (LCK) leadership.

In Kosovo, Mahmut Bakali assumed leadership of the provincial Party organization in mid-1971 and continued in that post until his forced removal in 1981, following the outbreak of unrest in Kosovo. He was replaced by Sinan Hasani (a "federal" Kosovo Albanian, who formerly served as a Vice President of the federal Assembly) at the LCK's 1982 Congress. The successive Secretaries of the LCK were Dusan Ristic (a Kosovo Serb), elected in 1974; Petar Kostic (a Kosovo Serb), elected in 1978; and Mitar Samardzic (a Kosovo Montenegrin), elected in 1982.

The turnover of the LCK Presidency in 1978 was consistent with the turnover in other republican/provincial Party organizations: 10 of the 25 members of the 1974 Presidency were included in the 1978 Presidency. But the Presidency elected at the 1982 Congress included only 13 members, only one of whom was a holdover from 1978 (another one had been on the 1974 Presidency). These numbers indicated the extent of the purge of the Kosovo Party leadership in the wake of the 1981 crisis. The new Presidency also reflected considerably more federal experience: 11 of the 14 members had some federal experience, while 16 of the 25 members of the 1974 Presidency had held some federal-level post; only 10 of the 23 members of the 1978 Presidency had federal experience. (See Table 4.) The 1982 LCK Presidency remained constituted principally of Kosovo Albanians; it included nine Albanians, three Serbs, and one Montenegrin from Kosovo.

The discussion of intra-LCY relationships in the 1970s in Section III pointed out how the LCK under Bakali went its own way in the 1970s, "Albanizing" and also increasing the prerogatives of the Party organization and the provincial power structure generally. The LCK was helped in this by the LCV, which followed tactics of active confrontation with the Serbian authorities. While benefiting from the victories the Vojvodina Party organization won in the name of provincial rights generally, the Kosovars focused on developments within Kosovo. Bakali evidently attempted to make the province as self-contained

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Table 4

(U) LEADERSHIP TURNOVER IN THE LCK PRESIDENCY

(UNCLASSIFIED)

| Year | No. of Members | Number Reelected | No. with Federal Experience | Presidency | Secretary |
|------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1974 | 25 | (a) | 16 | Bakali, Mahmut | Ristic, Dusan |
| 1978 | 23 | 10 | 12 | Bakali, Mahmut | Kostic, Petar |
| 1982 | 13 | 1 ^b | 11 | Hasani, Sinan | Samardzic, Mitar |

^aNot calculated.

^bOne 1974 Presidency member not reelected in 1978 was also included in the 1982 Presidency.

politically as possible (while continuing to seek large economic subsidies from outside).¹⁰

(U) The 1981 demonstrations in Pristina and elsewhere in Kosovo resulted in a political crisis that led to the intervention of the LCY in the LCK and Bakali's forced replacement. While the Kosovo situation remains in flux, the extent of the purge within the LCK has been limited. There was substantial turnover in top-level visible positions, including the LCK Presidency, but much less in middle- and lower-level positions. Only some 2 percent of the total Party membership in Kosovo was expelled in 1981-1982.¹¹

¹⁰ (U) This self-isolation is well described in Rusinow, 1980.

¹¹ (U) Tanjug, June 27, 1982, August 20, 1982, FBIS-EEU, June 29, 1982, August 24, 1982.

(U) Thus the Kosovo Party, even moreso than the Croatian Party in 1971, has remained in the hands of the dominant nationality, Albanians. The Serbian Party attempted to restrict the prerogatives of the Kosovo (as well as Vojvodina) regional Party organization in the wake of the Kosovo unrest, but all the evidence points to the failure of this effort. The Kosovo Party organization continues to enjoy republican-like status and to be headed primarily by Albanians. The Kosovo Albanian political elite has demonstrated that it can defend its prerogatives within the LCY. Yet it is confronted by popular Albanian nationalism that is far stronger, and much more oriented toward separation from Yugoslavia, than is the popular nationalism in Croatia and Serbia. The stability of the LCK leadership will be determined by whether it can contain and channel that Albanian nationalism.

¹³ See *NiN*, July 4, 1982.

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